

# THE MILITANT

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education and culture

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## ANC gears up election campaign in S. Africa

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

With passage of an interim constitution by South Africa's apartheid parliament December 22, the election campaign for a new constituent assembly moved into high gear. The country's first-ever democratic nonracial vote is to occur April 27. A victory for the African National Congress (ANC) election slate will mark the end of decades of white-minority rule.

"We start 1994 with vigor, for it is our year of freedom," stated ANC president Nelson Mandela in his Christmas and New Year's message to the nation. "All democrats who want peace and justice must work together to isolate the minority in our country who try to foster racial hatred and violence. They must not be given the slightest chance to undermine the democratic future that we have worked so hard for."

In a year-end interview with journalists, as reported in the Johannesburg *Sowetan*, Mandela elaborated further on the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead. He hailed the establishment of the Transitional Executive Council (TEC), which will "make sure that the Independent Electoral Commission will take control of the elections from the regime, and place it in the hands of the people themselves." In addition, the South African Broadcasting Corporation "is now going to be developed into an independent body and not a propaganda tool for any party or government."

The ANC leader said the threat of civil war by the right-wingers should not be underestimated. "During the last general elections the white vote was split between the Conservative Party and the National Party," Mandela pointed out. "But the right-wingers



ANC-organized People's Forum in South Africa. The ANC is calling public meetings and organizing voter education in preparation for the country's first nonracial election.

won close to a million votes during the [whites-only] referendum last year. They have a substantial following in the civil service, police, army, and they also man key installations such as energy and fuel and could therefore paralyze any government.

"To acknowledge those facts does not mean the peace forces are not powerful or unable to control the situation," continued Mandela. "The right-wing could cause a lot of damage. However, we believe that whatever damage they could cause, the demo-

cratic peace force will be able to put the fire out."

The ANC leader has been campaigning at public meetings in numerous cities where serious discussion and debate has unfolded on a number of political and social issues. Mandela, for example, responded to a variety of questions raised at a recent forum in Natal province. A representative from the Muslim community of Greytown asked why the ANC has not in-

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## Clinton retreats from threats to N. Korea

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

The U.S. government has retreated for now from its aggressive campaign of nuclear blackmail and threats of economic sanctions or even military strikes against North Korea. Backing away from its demand for virtual unlimited inspections of North Korea's nuclear facilities, Washington announced January 4 that it will now accept Pyongyang's offer of one full inspection of seven atomic sites.

Clinton administration officials said this tentative agreement might lead to canceling U.S. annual joint military exercises with South Korean forces scheduled for March.

"It's one of these cases where the Administration was huffing and puffing and backed down," an unnamed government official told the *New York Times*. "There's nothing wrong with trying to come out of this without starting a war."

For months Washington has been threatening to impose an economic blockade or carry out possible military strikes if the government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) didn't agree to demands for frequent nuclear inspections. U.S. president Bill Clinton stated a month ago that North Korea would never be allowed to possess nu-

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## Wall Street faces dilemma over Russia

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

As 1993 came to a close, editors of big-business newspapers and magazines in the United States and around the world seem to agree that reestablishing capitalism in Russia, their professed goal, is not in sight. At the same time, a discussion is unfolding among bourgeois opinion molders on how best to impose a market economy in that country.

A December 27 editorial in *Business Week* calls for slowing down the pace of "reform," a code word for the austerity measures that have been slashing the living standard of Russian working people. "It's time for doctrinaire government reformers . . . and their Western advisers to ease up and recognize that many Russians voted for the extremists as a protest against 'shock therapy,'" says *Business Week*.

The *Business Week* editors, like many other capitalist commentators, are shocked by the strong showing of rightist politician Vladimir Zhirinovsky in the December 12 parliamentary elections in Russia. His Liberal Democratic Party won 24 percent of the nationwide vote.

"Instead of simply cutting loose newly privatized companies, the government should help shore up select companies with government aid," continues *Business Week*. "Instead of letting new businesses develop in a haphazard free-for-all, the government must dedicate itself to rooting out corruption."

A news article in the same issue entitled, "'The reforms have lost,' " pinpointed the imperialist powers' unsolvable dilemma. "Russia and the West have to find a path to reform that doesn't put people's backs to the wall," it concludes.

The *New York Times* calls for capitalist

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Atomic blast at Nevada Test Site in 1957. Thousands were exposed to the fallout. Facts are coming out about other radiation experiments carried out on people without informed consent.

BY HARRY RING

For 12 years until the early 1970s, more than 100 state prison inmates in Washington and Oregon had their testicles exposed to high levels of radiation.

In the Boston area, between 1946 and 1956, at least 49 mentally retarded teenagers were fed radioactive food.

These are among the gruesome revelations stemming from a government damage control operation relating to the countless secret experiments designed to advance its capability to wage nuclear war.

The government now admits that up to 800 people were used as human guinea pigs in radiation experiments without informed consent.

And unknown thousands of people were subjected to radiation fallout from secret bomb tests.

In the Boston-area experiment, the teenagers were fed a heavy diet of cereal laced with radioactive forms of iron and calcium. The apparent purpose was to determine if large amounts of cereal would slow the digestion of those minerals.

Researchers from Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology conducted the tests. They were funded in part by the Atomic Energy Commission and by Quaker Oats. (If the experiments proved successful, would the cereal maker have used it as a commercial?)

In the Washington/Oregon prison experiment, the inmates were subjected to high doses of radiation to determine if such exposure would inhibit the development of sperm.

### The fraud of 'consent'

The victims received small payments and were required to sign "consent" forms. But an Energy Department spokesman now concedes the consent forms were a fraud since they didn't really explain the risk involved of developing testicular cancer.

Dr. Alvin Paulsen, a retired University of Washington medical professor who helped conduct the experiment, defended the project.

He said it would have been unethical to do the experiments

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**PLO, Tel Aviv debate accord**

Tel Aviv and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) concluded the latest round of talks December 29 to decide how to implement the accord they signed last September. Negotiators said they will resume talks in early January to try to resolve the remaining problems. The two sides reportedly agree on sharing responsibility for controlling access to the West Bank and Gaza Strip, but disagree over Tel Aviv's claim to veto power over "problematic visitors."

Negotiators also differ on the size of the area around the West Bank town of Jericho that will be under Palestinian control. PLO officials demand jurisdiction over an area roughly 77 to 116 square miles. Israeli representatives offer a 19 square mile region with no access to the nearby Dead Sea.

Tel Aviv rejected the PLO's request for UN troop protection of Israeli settlers in the occupied territories during a period of transition, after which the Israeli government would evacuate settlements and turn them over to the PLO. Tel Aviv insists on retaining the settlements and protecting them with Israeli soldiers.

**400 U.S. troops leave Somalia**

Another 400 U.S. soldiers left Mogadishu December 29. More than 9,000 U.S. troops remain in Somalia and on ships offshore. French, Belgian, and Swedish troops pulled out at the end of December. About 25,000 United Nations soldiers remain in the Horn of Africa. Washington, Bonn, and Rome have said they will withdraw their remaining forces by March 31.

**Tea workers strike in Sri Lanka**

Nearly 200,000 — 40 percent — of the workers at government-owned tea plantations in Sri Lanka walked off the job December 20. In response, the authorities invoked a law that allows jail terms of up to 20 years for inciting government hatred or contempt. Workers at the 55 struck estates are day laborers, mostly Tamils, who were employed about 200 days in 1993. Among other things, the unionists demand at least 300 days of work each year or pay layoffs.

**U.S. gov't rejects TB aid request**

Washington turned down a request by the World Health Organization to contribute \$3 million to a program to fight tuberculosis.



Members of Zapatista Army of National Liberation who seized four towns in the southern Mexican state of Chiapas. At least 84 people were killed January 1-2 in battles with government troops. Rebels subsequently retreated from three towns. The peasants, most of them Indians, proclaimed their struggle is "for work, land, housing, food, health care, education, independence, freedom, democracy, justice, and peace."

About one-third of the world's population is infected with the lung disease, which kills 3 million people a year. The organization says \$13 is enough to cure a tuberculosis patient in many countries. Since 1985, there has been a 35 percent increase in the number of cases of tuberculosis in the United States among children under age 15.

**Florida sues over immigration**

Lawton Chiles, Democratic governor of Florida, ordered state officials to sue the federal government to try to reduce the flow of undocumented immigrants and to get reimbursed for social services the state claims to have provided them.

"The people of Florida should not be compelled to subsidize the entry of illegal aliens into the United States, nor should they

tolerate continued failure of the United States Government to carry out its duties under the law," Chiles wrote in a letter to the state's attorney general. The governor said he is prepared to take the case to the Supreme Court. Similar suits brought by the states of New York and California have been dismissed.

**N.Y. cops acquitted in beatings**

A federal jury December 29 acquitted a Yonkers, New York, cop and his retired colleague on charges of using excessive force. Police officers Michael Buono and Bruce Nickels took two Northern Ireland immigrants from a christening party at a restaurant Dec. 2, 1991, to a deserted train station and beat them.

Patrick McNulty, a 33-year-old carpenter, and Patrick Lilly, a 33-year-old floor installer, produced vivid color photographs of nightstick-shaped bruises on their backs during the trial. The judge, however, did not allow them to introduce other evidence that would have helped their case. Nickels was also found not guilty on a third count of using excessive force against another celebrant, Margaret Nolan, who was brutally clubbed outside the restaurant when she protested her husband's arrest.

**Rightists torch slum in Haiti**

Supporters of the military that ousted Haitian president Jean-Bertrand Aristide in 1991, doused shacks in Cité Soleil, Haiti, with gasoline December 27 and set them on fire. The blaze, started by members of the Front for the Advancement and Progress of Haiti, killed 10

people and destroyed about 200 dwellings in the Port-au-Prince slum. An estimated 1,500 people were left homeless. The fire began a few hours after two officials of the rightist group were killed.

**Honduran military opens files**

A Honduran military spokesman said it will open its secret files on the murder and disappearance of close to 500 political activists in the 1980s and allow judges to question the officers blamed for these acts. The announcement was made December 30, one day after a government human rights commission report accused Argentine military advisers and right-wing Nicaraguan contras of helping U.S.-trained Honduran soldiers torture and kill leftists.

More than 14,000 U.S.-backed contras used bases in Honduras to try to topple the Sandinista National Liberation Front in Nicaragua. The report attributes much of the wrongdoing to a battalion once headed by the current chief of the Honduran military.

**U.S. troops arrive in Colombia**

A Colombian mayor ordered the flag at town hall to be flown at half-staff until the 150 U.S. soldiers that began arriving on the country's Pacific coast December 28 leave. The troops will be stationed at a naval base near the city of Cali. The chief of Colombia's armed forces, Gen. Ramón Bermúdez, said he could not understand the complaints. "I can't see why there is mention of violation of sovereignty as there is no such act, nothing which goes beyond helping the community," he said at a news conference. Officials say the troops came to help build a school and a clinic. Some Colombian news organizations charge that the troops arrived just four weeks after the U.S. ambassador urged Bogotá to pursue drug traffickers in Cali.

**Spanish theaters protest decree**

Many movie theaters throughout Spain closed December 20 in a one-day protest of a proposal to restrict the showing of U.S. films. The recent General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade didn't lower barriers to imports of movies and television shows. The Spanish government's decree would require theaters in cities with populations over 125,000 to schedule one day of European Community (EC) produced films for every two days of non-EC movies, and one in three for less populous areas. Of the films shown in Spain, 77 percent are made in the United States, 9 percent in Spain, and 14 percent in other EC countries.

**Miners in Germany take pay cuts**

Coal bosses in Germany and the IG Bergbau and Energie union agreed to cut miners' workweek to four days and reduce wages by 6 percent. The miners had been scheduled to get a 3 percent wage increase. Employers said the cuts were necessary to avoid laying off 10,000 miners in the Ruhr Valley. Coal companies can cancel the agreement anytime in the next two years if they want to reduce their workforce or raise profits.

— PAT SMITH

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# Capitalist investment mushrooms in India

BY GREG ROSENBERG

"...the southern city of Bangalore, about 500 miles southeast of Bombay, has become the hub of India's Silicon Valley, home to more than 100 computer software companies and hardware industries—and perhaps tens of thousands of computer engineers."

"Among the investors are I.B.M., Texas Instruments, Hewlett-Packard, Citicorp and Motorola. Only the United States and possibly Russia have more software engineers than India."

-New York Times, Dec. 29, 1993

Capitalist enterprises around the world have begun to pour massive investments in plants and equipment in parts of India, the second most populous country on the globe with more than 880 million people.

In 1993 alone, U.S. companies invested more than in the entire preceding 45 years since India won independence from the British crown.

About 75 percent of India's population lives in rural areas in a heavily agricultural economy. The transformation of the peasantry into urbanized wage-workers is fueling the investment boom. And with a middle-class of engineers, doctors, and other professionals numbering as large as 250 million the capitalist families see a big new market.

The financial press internationally is comparing developments in India with the recent influx of capital into pockets of China, where foreign investment is being propelled by capitalist market measures introduced by Beijing and fueled by the entry of millions of peasants into the urban working class.

Since 1991 the government of Indian prime minister P.V. Narasimha Rao has carried out an economic restructuring program designed to lure foreign capital. Rao lowered a host of trade barriers and limits on non-Indian ownership of enterprises.

For decades, the Indian government maintained a highly protected economy with large-scale state ownership benefiting wealthy employers there. The Tata family empire, for example, encompasses manufacturing and distribution of cars, trucks, buses, steel, computers, electronics, fertilizers, tea, and more. The Tata companies sell 2 percent of the entire Gross National Product, about \$5 billion a year.

In July 1991, the maximum import duty was cut from 300 percent. It now stands at

85 percent. In 1992, import controls were abolished for most capital goods and raw materials. A series of devaluations have left the rupee at about two-thirds of its former value. In March 1993, Finance Minister Manmohan Singh unified the exchange rate and floated the rupee. Investors from outside India can now own up to 51 percent in a company. Foreign investors can raise their holdings beyond that limit with additional clearance from the Secretariat of Industrial Approvals, and in some cases from other bodies.

The government also imposed austerity measures that squeeze the living standards of workers and peasants.

## Austerity measures

Spokespeople for imperialist powers have cheered Rao's measures and offered ample advice. The *Economist*, published in Britain, wrote in a December 4 editorial that the government "should now flog the possibly-profitable outfits—such as the oil and steel companies—while sorting out the thousands of enterprises touchingly known as 'sick.'

"Then, to encourage private industry to restructure, Mr. Rao needs to wipe off the statute books the legislation that makes it technically illegal to close a factory or sack a worker."

Reflecting the fear of India's rulers that the belt-tightening drive might spark outbursts from working people, Singh told the *Financial Times* that trade unions "are powerful. If you take them on head-on you risk having the reforms derailed altogether. You have to take every step taking account of what can be done. Tactics have to be sensitive to the need of the moment."

Capitalist families in India have given firm backing to the austerity drive in the hopes that they can increase their profits. Some employers, however, argue that the reforms unfairly benefit foreign capitalists,



Children working in a match factory in India. Capital investment boom will draw peasants into more modern factories in urban areas.

and that they need protection.

The government's hand was reinforced over the past several months. In November, the ruling Congress Party's largest parliamentary opposition, the rightist Bharatiya Janata Party, suffered a setback at the polls in state elections.

The finance minister offered his resignation following a report that held him partly responsible for the 1992 Bombay stock market scandal. The ruling families however rallied to Singh's defense, and Rao rejected the resignation.

Meanwhile, the government is boasting of a surge in exports, and the highest foreign currency reserves held to date.

India is the world's fourth largest debtor, after Brazil, Mexico, and Indonesia. The foreign debt has grown to \$85 billion, up from \$37 billion in 1986.

Since 1991, New Delhi has approved \$3.5 billion in foreign capital investment. In contrast, during the previous decade less than \$1 billion came into the country. Companies from the United States, Britain, Canada, Japan, Germany, and Sweden have rushed to increase their stake in Indian firms, raising their ownership to 51 percent.

Coca Cola, PepsiCo, U.S. West, General Electric Capital, Morgan Stanley, Seagram, and Peugeot won approval recently

to increase their stakes and set up ventures in India. Enron Power of the United States signed an agreement December 8 to build a \$930 million power station near Bombay.

In cities like Bangalore, where the software companies are concentrated, a thin layer of workers are doing better alongside a mushrooming middle class. A mid-level engineer in this city makes about \$800 a month, a tiny fraction of what engineers in the United States, Japan, or Europe receive, but considerably more than an industrial worker in India.

The great majority of workers and farmers in India still live in grinding poverty. Gross Domestic Product per capita was \$290 last year. About one-half of the population cannot read.

While capitalist investment expands, holdovers from precapitalist society are retained and molded into new forms. One such practice is dowry payment.

## Dowry payments

Despite a 32-year-old statute banning dowries—money and gifts given by a bride's parents to the groom—the practice still flourishes. The *New York Times* reported December 30 that it is now being practiced "with a vengeance, among the growing middle classes."

In 1992 alone, 4,785 women were murdered by their husbands for not having provided adequate dowries, according to government statistics. In the Silicon Valley around Bangalore, dowry abuse has reached "epidemic" proportions, according to the *Times*.

"My husband wanted a house in his name," said Nagavani, a woman interviewed by a *Times* reporter. "He wanted a 30,000 rupee scooter," about \$1,000. "He beat me. He hit me on my back. He used to poke me with a needle on my back. He kept saying, I am an engineer and we must have lots of things."

This violence against women has also sparked protests. Thousands demonstrated in New Delhi recently to protest the rise in dowry-related killings.

## ANC election campaign switches to high gear

### Continued from front page

cluded even one of the four main Indian languages—Urdu, Hindi, Gujarati, or Tamil—among the 11 national languages it has proclaimed for South Africa. "We as the ANC regard this as a serious omission that I cannot explain," stated Mandela. "It was raised in the last NEC [National Executive Committee] meeting and I assure you that it will be discussed again."

The director of the AIDS Information Center in Pietermaritzburg asked Mandela at the same forum about the ANC's policy toward combatting this disease. "AIDS is one of the most serious problems facing the world," commented Mandela. "We must begin to teach our children at an early stage about how to indulge in safe sex and use contraceptives.... The present government has neglected this issue." Mandela also reiterated his support for a woman's right to control her own body and choose abortion.

### Voter education program

In preparation for the April 27 balloting in which an estimated 22 million people could go to the polls, the ANC has launched a voter education program. "We are opening offices throughout the country to be nearer the people," stated Mandela. "We have to make sure that our house-to-house campaign is effective.... We have also launched the People's Forum where people, instead of leaders, do the talking."

The National Party led by F.W. de Klerk launched its election campaign December 21 with a call for a debate with Mandela on television and radio. This party, which for decades upheld the banner of apartheid rule, is now attempting to recast itself as a non-

racial party.

"This [election] is essentially a contest between the National Party's corrupt white-majority rule and mismanagement on the one hand, and democracy, reconstruction and development on the other," commented a December 23 ANC statement.

"The ANC is not opposed to debates among leaders of parties contesting the election," the statement continued. "But precisely because the ANC is concerned about the plight of the people and it is seriously working on plans to address these problems, media events of the type de Klerk seems to be so desperate for, will be a cherry on top of a serious campaign—not the starting point."

The Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) announced at its annual conference in mid-December that the organization has decided to participate in the April elections despite opposition from the PAC's student and youth affiliates. The PAC, however, rejected involvement in the Transitional Executive Council.

### Violent attacks continue

Violent attacks continue to take the lives of South African residents. Gunmen armed with automatic rifles and hand-grenades killed four people and wounded five in a crowded restaurant in Cape Town December 30. Several of the dead and wounded were white. The South African Press Association reported receiving calls taking credit for the attack from a man claiming to speak for the Azanian People's Liberation Army (APLA), the armed wing of the PAC. Another caller from the Azanian National Liberation Army (AZANLA) also claimed responsibility.

Two days later, nine Blacks were killed in the East Rand townships of Tokoza and Katlehong near Johannesburg and in a squatter camp in the port city of Durban. On December 24, assassins shot dead Patford Shuma, the personal assistant of ANC deputy general secretary Jacob Zuma. The ANC called this killing a "premeditated assassination."

Commenting on the Cape Town killings, an ANC news release said, "Such acts of naked terrorism serve only the interests of those who want to destabilize negotiations and prevent free and fair elections."

Pointing to the double standard of justice that exists by the police in going after the culprits of these attacks, the ANC statement continued, "It is regrettable that there seems to be a different response when such attacks occur in townships as compared with those that occur where whites are victims."

### Aid to Cuba

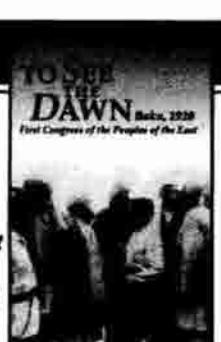
In other news, supporters of the democratic movement in South Africa sent a symbolic donation of aid, consisting of vitamin tablets and \$2,000 in cash, to the people of Cuba. Representatives of the ANC and the National Union of Mineworkers visited Havana in December to announce this act of solidarity.

Elías Fenyane from the ANC mission in Cuba pointed out that when the optic neuritis epidemic was affecting the Cuban people, a South African company offered to send vitamin tablets to Cuba, but received an order from its headquarters in the United States not to do so. Many people of South Africa were so outraged by this decision that they took to the streets to collect money and medicine to send to Cuba.

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# Librarians at meeting in London discuss 'breaking information blockade' to Cuba

BY BOB BUCHAN

LONDON — "From Hackney to Havana: Breaking the Information Blockade," was the theme of a meeting held November 6 in Hackney, East London, as part of the National Library Week. About 60 people came to the event, organized by local librarians in conjunction with the International Group of the Library Association (IGLA).

"We are about the free flow of information, we are against any form of censorship, and we are for protecting the rights of access of any individual to the information they need." This is how Russell Bowden summed up the IGLA's attitude toward the Cuban revolution and the U.S. trade embargo. He reported the International Federation of Library Associations will meet in Havana in 1994. Bowden said he regretted the fact that U.S. government policies would prevent many delegates from the United States from attending and would prohibit exhibits from U.S. companies at the conference center.

Bowden expressed his confidence that the "Cubans will put on a first rate conference. Our president has toured the conference facilities and he reports that Cuba and our Cuban colleagues are absolutely prepared. Of course the blockade will cause problems but the international community will rise to the challenge."

Steve Wilkinson, speaking for the Cuba Solidarity Campaign, said the U.S. embargo has cost Cuba \$40 billion. In particular he described the impact of the trade sanctions on the publishing industry on the Caribbean island. Prior to the revolution there were no indigenous publishing houses in Cuba, he said. After the revolution 15 establishments were set up. By 1989 those were producing 50 million books a year. Severe paper shortages, however, meant that last year only two new novels were produced in Cuba compared with an average of more than 15 in previous years.

## Books for Cuba Fund

Continuing on this theme, Martin Marriott, representing the London Pathfinder bookshop, explained that these shortages highlighted "the tremendous importance of the library system in Cuba, so that books that are available in Cuba can get into as many hands as possible."

Marriott described how representatives of Pathfinder Press staffed an exhibition of books at a library conference in Holguin, Cuba, in 1992. "The exhibition of more than 100 Pathfinder titles never left Holguin. Today the books are in the library of the Higher Technical Institute of Holguin. And they are being used. Pathfinder received a letter from a student there recently giving his views on the book *Socialism on Trial* and asking for more information about the author, James P. Cannon. Another correspondence, from a teacher there, stated how much he enjoyed reading *Habla Malcolm X* (Malcolm X Speaks) and that he would make sure his friends read it as well."

Marriott said that because of increased demand from Cuban libraries and other institutions for donations of Pathfinder books, supporters of the *Militant* established a Books for Cuba Fund. Since last April, workers, students, and others in the United

States, Britain, New Zealand, and other countries have donated more than \$6,000. This sum covers only a portion of the costs of books already donated. More funds are needed to cover future requests.

Marriott went on to describe his experiences in Cuba as a participant on the recent Jose Marti Brigade. "It was organized by the Cuba Solidarity Campaign and enabled two dozen of us to take part in voluntary farming work alongside many young Cubans who were spending their summer holidays the same way.

"When we first set up a table of Pathfinder books in our rest area a small thing happened that made a very big impression on me. As we started unpacking the boxes all the young Cubans who had been sitting around jumped out of their seats and started grabbing more tables, opening the boxes, laying the books out — looking carefully at each one as they did so — and passing them around. You could almost tell who was a Cuban student by who jumped up to the books."

Marriott also described how one Cuban woman who is Black kept returning to look at *How Far We Slaves Have Come*, which includes speeches by Nelson Mandela and Fidel Castro during Mandela's visit to Cuba in 1991. She explained that her father had volunteered to fight in Angola in the 1980s against the invasion of that country by the South African apartheid army. She had never read Mandela's speech before. Another woman took a copy of the magazine *New International* no. 7 featuring the article "Opening Guns of World War III" and explained that it would be useful in her new job in the Foreign Ministry. These students were only able to get hold of these books because of the financial contributions of international volunteers from many countries working on the farm.

Marriott concluded by appealing for support for the London commitment to the Books for Cuba Fund. "We want to raise, from the contributions of those like yourselves, a sum of money that will allow us to contribute a wide selection of books to a Cuban library, to be given as an act of solidarity from people here. In this way and others, let's keep working together to keep breaking the information blockade and playing our part in fighting for a world without borders."

## Services for disabled

The next speaker was Stephen King, director of the Royal National Institute for the Blind. King explained that until last February he had no knowledge of Cuba. At that time he visited the Caribbean island along with librarians from 26 countries in Latin America, to study how services for the blind



Militant/Martin Koppel  
Pathfinder books on display at exhibit in Holguin, Cuba, in October 1992. These books were subsequently donated to the library of the Higher Technical Institute of Holguin. Increased demand by Cuban libraries and other institutions for donations of Pathfinder books led to the establishment of the Books for Cuba Fund.

are organized in Cuban libraries. He was impressed by the large number of libraries, more than 4,000, but noted that they were "dark, dingy, and badly equipped with a lack of modern books." He also said that the personal service and attention to detail provided by the staff was excellent.

Pupils at a school for the blind manufacture their own paper and exercise books. With regard to services for the disabled, King stated that he "would be very proud if we had here what they have there. Reading sessions in Braille [language for blind] in the libraries were extremely effective and well organized."

There are difficulties caused by the shortage of Braille paper and tape recorders. After he returned to Britain, King set himself the task of raising funds to set up facilities in Havana for "talking-books" to be produced by volunteers. As a result, 4 specialist tape recorders, 30 personal tape recorders, and 2,000 tapes are now on their way to Cuba and a volunteer will be going to set up the recording studio.

Stephen Roberts, a senior lecturer at Thames Valley University, was the final speaker. "In spite of the problems there was a great deal of substance and organization to the library system in Cuba," he said. "It still looks relatively strong compared with other countries in the region." He also pointed to the high quality of the professional work carried out in Cuban libraries.

Describing the U.S. embargo as an affront to the free exchange of ideas and access to information, he suggested that librarians in Britain organize twinning arrangements with libraries in Cuba.

The meeting was held in a public library named after the Trinidadian writer on politics and cricket C.L.R. James, who is the author of the Pathfinder book *Fighting Racism in World War II*. The library recently ordered a broad range of Pathfinder books on Cuba for its "Three Continents Liberation Collection." Posters of the Pathfinder Mural — a six-story-high wall painting, depicting dozens of working class leaders whose works Pathfinder prints, at the publisher's central office in New York — are permanently displayed in prominent positions in the library.

Ian Grant, manager of the Pathfinder bookshop in London, helped staff a Pathfinder booktable at the event. "The meeting demonstrated that Cuba is becoming less and less isolated in the world today," Grant commented. "The broad range of speakers on the platform prepared to look objectively at the gains of the Cuban revolution, to fight for solidarity, and to speak out against the embargo was a very striking feature."

Bob Buchan is a member of the Transport and General Workers Union in Luton, England.

## D.C. rally demands return of Aristide to Haiti

BY JANET POST

WASHINGTON, D.C. — A demonstration held December 16 in front of the White House marked the third anniversary of the 1990 election of deposed Haitian president Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

Nearly 300 people, including two bus-loads from New York, one from Philadel-

phia, and one from Miami, rallied to support the return of Aristide to Haiti.

The action was one of several called around the United States by numerous Haitian rights groups. It was organized locally by the Washington Office on Haiti. Other demands protesters raised included justice for Haitian refugees and support for the economic embargo against Haiti.

Rollande Dorancy, executive director of the Haitian Refugee Center in Miami, told demonstrators, "we are going to fight for our freedom and we are going to take it." She said that while many Haitian-Americans voted for President Bill Clinton, "unfortunately we have found that Clinton and [former president George] Bush are the same" regarding their policies on Haiti.

Carlos Salinas, the Amnesty International program officer for Latin America and the Caribbean, condemned the Clinton repatriation policy, which is "turning Haiti into a large island prison where people are arrested, tortured, and killed."

Salinas also spoke of the funding and training of the Haitian military by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) who "make a mockery of human rights and then flaunt their 'ignorance.'"

The CIA created a secret intelligence agency in Haiti called the National Intelligence Service (SIN) shortly after dictator

Jean-Claude Duvalier fled into exile in February 1986. One of the agency's top informers was Lt. Gen. Raoul Cédras, now head of Haiti's military regime, whose reports included exposés on Aristide.

Another speaker, Haitian activist Yolande Jean, had been detained by the U.S. military at its base in Guantánamo, Cuba. She accused Clinton of "playing a hypocritical game — not the game of democrats but the game of Macoutes," referring to the Tonton Macoutes death squads in Haiti.

In addition, Lynne Landsberg, associate director of the Religious Action Center for Reform Judaism; Michael Ratner, a lawyer with the Center for Constitutional Rights; Antoine Adrien, a priest who works with Aristide; and U.S. representative Charles Rangel addressed the rally.

A Haitian demonstrator from New York said that "only armed forces from another country" could resolve the crisis in Haiti.

But Alain Moise, a Haitian worker from Washington, D.C., said, "We need to concentrate more on people in Haiti than on the international community. There is no alternative to the Haitian people themselves mobilizing for democracy in Haiti."

Janet Post is a member of International Association of Machinists Local 368 in Miami.

## Contribute to Books for Cuba Fund

Many Cuban libraries have requested Pathfinder books. You can help make these valuable political tools available to Cuban youth, workers, and other fighters by contributing to the Books for Cuba Fund. The fund helps cover the cost of donations of Pathfinder books to libraries and other cultural institutions in Cuba.

Make checks payable to the *Militant*, earmarked for the Books for Cuba Fund and send to: 410 West St., New York, NY 10014.



Member of voluntary youth work brigade in Cuba reading book of Malcolm X speeches in Spanish

# Clinton's proposal threatens habitat of Pacific Northwest

BY FLOYD FOWLER

PORTLAND, Oregon — Assistant Interior Secretary George Frampton announced December 10 the Clinton administration's proposal for protection of Northern Spotted Owl habitat on state and private land in Oregon, Washington, and northern California. The administration's plan for preservation of habitat on federal lands, called Option 9, was released last summer. Option 9 must still be approved by a federal court.

The goal of U.S. president Bill Clinton's package is to revive the profits of the timber industry. The December 11 *Oregonian* accurately headlined its coverage of the new proposal "Clinton plan would ease NW logging limits." Long-term habitat conservation on private land would become voluntary, and tens of thousands of acres of old-growth forests would be opened up to logging, including clear-cutting.

Two of Oregon's six remaining roadless national forests over 25,000 acres would be logged for the first time. In the Siskiyou National Forest more than a third of the 180,000 acres of roadless forest would be parceled out for sale to the timber industry. Industry spokespeople and politicians from Clinton to Ross Perot have sought to portray environmental activists as pursuing protection for the owl at the cost of timber and mill workers' jobs.

Environmental organizations have repeatedly mounted campaigns over the last decade that have forced governmental restrictions on timber industry destruction of old-growth forests in the northwest United States and Canada. These campaigns have often centered on legal challenges to government sales of forests to the industry.

As a consequence, the Fish and Wildlife Service, the state Departments of Forestry, the Bureau of Land Management, and other government agencies have increasingly found their actions exposed to public scrutiny. In October, Forest Service personnel testified before Congress to systematic under-valuing of timber slated for sale, rigged bidding procedures, and the deliberate falsification of agency records of timber industry fraud.

These agencies are instrumental to the profitable operation of the timber industry, both by selling huge tracts of forests for a pittance and by acquiescing to clear-cutting, over-grazing, and other practices that generate profits at the expense of the environment. A growing number of species of fish and wildlife, including the Northern Spotted Owl, are threatened as a result. Nine of 10 major salmon species in the region are extinct or face extinction. Silt run-off from hillsides denuded of trees has made thousands of miles of streams too polluted to sustain spawning.

## Forest summit

After a federal court halted by injunction sales of timber on federal land for the third time in four years, Clinton's much publicized Northwest Forest Summit was held in Portland, Oregon last April.

Several demonstrations were organized by the timber industry during the summit. Companies gave employees time off to be bused into Portland to attend. Union officials of the International Woodworkers of America, and the Western Council of Industrial Unions, among others, supported this campaign.

For industry giants such as Georgia Pacific and Weyerhaeuser, the northwest forest crisis is about preserving neither jobs nor owls. In the late 1980s, as the volume of large diameter old-growth logs being milled declined, small mills closed while the large companies modernized.

Thousands of workers lost their jobs as a result. As world prices for wood products

fell and resistance grew to continued old-growth cutting, company after company forced wage and benefit cuts on workers already suffering lay-offs or mill closings. Many communities in southern Oregon have been devastated. Now, having driven down the price of timber workers' labor, the industry is counting on the Clinton administration to hand over the remaining northwest old-growth forests. The same thirst for greater profits has driven Canadian companies to go after the Clayquot Sound forests, despite opposition this has generated.

Washington's proposals have provoked division among environmentalists. Some had hoped for positive results after participating in the April Forest Summit. Organizations such as the Sierra Club and the Audubon Society have voiced support for the Option 9 proposal. Others point to the need to fight the plan. Bhagwati Poddar responded to the Option 9 proposal in the *Oregonian* October 26.

"No plan that dismisses the interests of future generations as lightly as Option 9 does in order to serve the temporary interests of the timber industry is, to quote from the draft supplemental environmental impact statement, 'worthy of concern and support' for 'it has the familiar ring of intolerance, prejudice and arrogance.'

1945 atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.



Pacific redwood forest showing lumber clear cut. Clinton's Option 9 plan allows unlimited logging for the profit of timber industry, endangering environment and wildlife.

"Would the draft impact statement be as sanguine about the probability of the extinction of a species if it were the timber industry that faced extinction? Have we done all we can to save species or have we decided to

give up the battle before embarking on the pretension of fighting the battle?"

This new proposal will surely sharpen the debate over how to defend the environment and the northwest old-growth forest.

## More facts revealed on U.S. radiation exposure

Continued from front page

on mobile members of the population. But, he added, "Prisoners provided an opportunity for us to follow these gentlemen for four and five years."

In a CNN interview, Energy Secretary Hazel O'Leary suggested that victims of such tests be compensated.

This is no act of generosity. Her proposal that Congress determine "what would be appropriate compensation" would establish strict limits on the amount victims could receive, and head off law suits that might win higher damage awards.

Congress has already approved such compensation for those who developed certain types of cancers and could prove they were downwind from Nevada nuke tests, were soldiers or war plant workers exposed there or in Pacific Island tests, or mined uranium. Fixed rates of compensation range from \$50,000-\$100,000.

In an effort to blunt the shock effect of the continuing revelations, government spokespeople and the media suggest that in the years following World War II, when many of these experiments were conducted, there was not an adequate knowledge of the dangers of radiation.

This is a shameless lie. One secret Atomic Energy Commission memo on this, which recently came to light, was written in 1950 by one of the agency's top researchers.

### 'Buchenwald touch'

He warned that the experiments being conducted on unwitting victims had a "little of the Buchenwald touch." This referred to the notorious Nazi-era German concentration camp where countless lethal experiments were conducted on prisoners.

In fact, a 1980 investigation revealed that government officials had organized a sophisticated cover-up of evidence after sheep herders in the Southwest filed a suit in 1955 for compensation because the weakness, sterility, and death of their livestock was caused by radiation from Washington's nuclear tests.

The U.S. government has long used working people in other parts of the world as guinea pigs in its nuclear experiments as well.

The second nuclear test in the ocean at Bikini atoll in the Pacific after World War II threw up millions of tons of contaminated water and created vast radioactive mists. This "would have not only an immediate lethal effect, but would establish a long term hazard through contamination of structures by deposition of radioactive particles," said a report of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in 1947.

The plea of ignorance is particularly brazen in light of the horrifying results of the

1945 atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Meanwhile, the General Accounting Office, a congressional body, released information on a dozen experiments where large amounts of radiation were deliberately released into the atmosphere.

"At the dawn of the nuclear age," *New York Times* reporter Keith Schneider wrote, "government scientists, conducting their work as if atomic war was imminent, placed a top priority on research to determine the effects of radiation on civilians and soldiers."

It's true that in the period following the second world war, there was a real threat of atomic war. But that danger came from the U.S. government, not the Soviet Union, as is so often and falsely argued. Besides dropping the bombs on Japan in 1945, Washington came dangerously close to using nuclear weapons during the Korean War in the early 1950s.

By the latter half of the 1950s, the USSR developed nuclear weapons and space technology. This convinced the imperialists in Washington that the risk of massive destruction not only of capitalist Europe but also the United States were too great to consider a direct assault against the Soviet and Eastern European workers states. Since the end of the 1960s, the Soviet Union has had rough parity with U.S. imperialism in nuclear weaponry and delivery systems.

Part of the fallout of the current revelations has been a renewed focus on the health damage suffered by countless workers in the country's 109 nuclear power and weapons plants.

In fact, the U.S. government has spent nearly \$50 million dollars defending the nuclear industry bosses from lawsuits by workers and others who have been harmed by radiation from nuclear production.

In San Diego, California, a landmark suit is slated to open in federal court. It was brought by Rung Tang, who had been an inspector at the San Onofre nuclear power plant and is now terminally ill from leukemia.

She is seeking damages from the owners and operators of the plant, who tried, unsuccessfully, to bar the case from coming to trial on grounds that the radiation exposure she had suffered was well within the "safety" limits set by the federal government.

### San Onofre case

During the 1985-6 period Tang was an inspector at San Onofre, the plant experienced a rash of safety problems, including defective fuel rods and hundreds of incidents involving "nuclear fleas."

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# 'Don't ask, don't tell' policy maintains pariah status of gays in U.S. military

BY SARA LOBMAN

The new regulations issued by the Clinton administration as part of its "don't ask, don't tell" policy on gays in the military show that — campaign promises to the contrary — the White House will effectively maintain a ban on gays in the armed forces. U.S. president Bill Clinton also announced he will appeal a federal court ruling finding the ban unconstitutional.

The Pentagon released new detailed rules December 22. They are aimed at putting into practice the policy Clinton announced in July, which was approved by Congress as part of the 1994 budget. The directive will take effect February 5.

Clinton had promised during his campaign for president to issue an executive order ending the ban against gays serving in the U.S. armed forces. Hundreds of individuals have been expelled from the military each year as a result of these regulations. However, shortly after the new administration took office, it became clear that many ruling class figures — both civilian and military — were opposed to lifting the ban. Clinton agreed to delay any action, instead instructing then-Secretary of Defense Les Aspin to prepare new guidelines.

The new directives mean that recruits will no longer be required to say they are heterosexual as a precondition for entering the armed forces. However, a plethora of rules will continue to make it almost impossible for a gay soldier to openly acknowledge his or her sexual orientation.

## 'Homosexual conduct'

While the regulations state that people will be forced out of the military "on the basis of conduct, not sexual orientation," the definition of "conduct" is so broad that it includes not only a homosexual act, but "a statement by the member that demonstrates a propensity or intent to engage in homosexual acts, or a homosexual marriage or attempted marriage." In other words, according to Clinton's policy, just saying you are gay is considered a "homosexual act."

"A statement by a member that demonstrates a propensity of intent to engage in homosexual acts — such as a statement by the member that he or she is a homosexual — is grounds for separation not because it reflects the member's sexual orientation," the rules say, "but because the statement indicates a likelihood that the member engages in or will engage in homosexual acts."

## CORRECTIONS

The "Pathfinder around the world" column in the Dec. 20, 1993, *Militant*, incorrectly identified the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) as the sponsor of the Mother Jones Dinner. The correct sponsor is the Mother Jones Foundation, which is not affiliated to the UMWA.

In the article "Miners ratify new contract, ending seven-month strike," which appeared in the Dec. 27, 1993, issue, the figures for the vote on the UMWA contract in Alabama were reversed. The article should have read: In Alabama, 48 percent opposed the pact with 52 percent in favor.

Also in the December 27 issue, the caption under the picture of Salman Rushdie on page five is incorrect. *Midnight's Children* is one of the author's earlier novels, not his latest.

The first footnote on page nine of that same issue, in the article "Fascism, what it is and how to fight it," should have read that the fascist campaign of violence began in Bologna, Nov. 21, 1920 — not 1902.

Two errors appeared in the article "Union tops push new concessions at United," which appeared in the Jan. 10, 1994, issue. The pilots' union at United is the Airline Pilots Association (ALPA), not the Allied Pilots Association. The flight attendants' union at United is the Association of Flight Attendants (APA), not the Association of Professional Flight Attendants.

The rules say that an individual's statement that he or she is gay is not sufficient to get them immediately thrown out of the armed forces. However, such a statement — or a report by a "reliable" third party that the person engaged in homosexual conduct or said they were gay — is all that is required for the military brass to begin a full-fledged investigation.

Once such an investigation begins, the accusations are assumed to be true unless the individual soldier can prove that he or she has not engaged in any of the forbidden behavior. "If it becomes clear that they are a homosexual, if they state their homosexuality, they have an opportunity to show that they do not engage in acts," said Jamie Gorelick, the Pentagon's general council.

According to the new regulations, the banned conduct includes any human activity that satisfies sexual desires between members of the same sex and "any bodily conduct that a reasonable person would understand" as homosexual, including two men or two women holding hands. The policy makes no distinction between private and public behavior or between activities engaged in on and off duty.

A December 24 *New York Times* editorial said the new regulations are "a modest advance that does away with the worst abuses of the old system while entrenching the archaic and homophobic ban on gay soldiers more firmly than ever."

The *Washington Post* editors argued the same day that the policy "will bring an end to the bad old days of witch hunts, sneaky entrapments and blanket surveillance." But they also noted that the new rules give military commanders "a lot of room to investigate and



A federal court ordered the Navy to commission Joseph Steffan (above), who was forced to resign from the Naval Academy after admitting he was gay. The court found the military's ban on gays unconstitutional. The Clinton administration is planning to appeal the decision.

drive out gays and lesbians who don't keep their sexual preferences to themselves, even when such conduct is consensual, in private, off base, and on their own time."

Aspin defended the regulations. "This is a good policy. We want it implemented," he said during the December 22 news conference.

ence. "The important thing is that an acrimonious fight in Congress was avoided . . . and the White House was permitted to preserve its political capital for other fights," he added.

## Administration to defend ban in court

In a related matter, the White House announced December 29 that it would appeal a federal court ruling that found the old ban on gays in the military violated the Constitution's guarantee of equal protection under the law.

The November ruling, issued by a three-judge panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit, ordered the U.S. Navy to commission Joseph Steffan and to grant him his diploma. Steffan was forced to resign from the Naval Academy in 1987, six weeks before graduation, after telling a disciplinary panel he was gay.

According to an article in the *New York Times*, the appeal is part of the administration's preparations to defend the "don't ask, don't tell" directive from expected legal challenges. Clinton fears the ruling will provide a powerful legal precedent for those who oppose all discrimination against gays in the military. While the court ruling did not specifically refer to the new regulations, it did bar the Pentagon from dismissing members of the military simply because they are gay.

"The government cannot discriminate against a certain class in order to give effect to the prejudice of others," Chief Judge Abner Mikva wrote for the court. "Such discrimination plays directly into the hands of the bigots."

To try to focus attention away from the constitutional issues, and to prevent accusations that his administration is defending a policy he had promised to abolish, Clinton will appeal the court ruling on technical grounds, arguing that only the President, not the Justice Department, can commission a Navy midshipman.

# Clinton faces allegations of misconduct

BY NAOMI CRAINE

Less than one year after his inauguration, U.S. president Bill Clinton is embroiled in questions over his dealings with a failed savings and loan, together with his attempt to conceal related documents. At the same time the president is trying to face down allegations that as governor of Arkansas he used state police to arrange and hide his sexual relations with several women.

The White House acknowledged December 20 that personal financial files of Clinton and his wife Hillary were removed from the office of Vincent Foster before investigators had a chance to examine them.

Foster, a deputy White House counsel who had handled many of the Clintons' financial dealings in Arkansas, committed suicide July 20. Two days later White House lawyer Bernard Nussbaum sorted through and disposed of the attorney's papers, showing very little of the material to the police investigating Foster's death. The files Nussbaum sent to the Clintons' personal attorney in Washington, D.C., included documents related to their investment in Whitewater Development Corporation.

Whitewater, which the Clintons owned together with James McDougal, has come under Justice Department scrutiny as part of a criminal investigation of the Madison Guaranty Savings and Loan, also owned by McDougal. Whitewater had its account with the thrift, which went under in 1989 at a cost of \$60 million in federal deposit insurance.

Federal investigators are looking into the possibility that Clinton, as governor of Arkansas, exercised favoritism toward Madison in return for personal loans and special treatment in connection with Whitewater. In 1985 McDougal raised thousands of dollars — much of it drawn from Madison's coffers — to help repay \$50,000 owed to Clinton by his own campaign committee. The thrift made many other loans to prominent politicians in the state, some of which went bad to the tune of hundreds of thousands of dollars.

The Clintons say they lost nearly \$70,000 invested in Whitewater. Nevertheless, a December 28 editorial in the *Wall Street Journal*

said, "Reporters who have examined the Clintons' tax returns say no Whitewater loss was claimed for tax purposes."

A senior White House official declared December 18, "We are not aware that any law-enforcement official is looking into the fact that a file relating to Whitewater or McDougal disappeared or in any way was improperly handled. All the files in Vince Foster's office were properly handled."

Three days later Hillary Clinton said she was "bewildered" by the continued interest in the matter, and said she saw no reason to make the files public.

After several days of pressure, however, which included numerous news articles and opinion pieces such as a *New York Times* editorial titled "Release the Whitewater Files," Clinton announced December 23 that his lawyer would turn over the papers to investigators. But the president insisted that the files would not be made public.

## Accusations of philandering

The same week the right-wing magazine *American Spectator* ran a cover story based on an interview with two Arkansas state troopers who were assigned to the gubernatorial mansion during Clinton's tenure. The cops described at length how they were allegedly used by the governor to hide several long-term affairs from his wife and to arrange numerous one-night stands.

"We lied for him and helped him cheat on his wife, and he treated us like dogs," one of the troopers said.

In the article *American Spectator* writer David Brock compares Clinton's behavior to that of former president John F. Kennedy. "Kennedy and his handlers worked hard to keep stories of the president's womanizing out of the papers, much as the Clinton campaign would do some thirty years later," he says. The article rehashes stories from Clinton's 1992 presidential campaigns about an alleged 12-year affair with a former cabaret singer who was later given a state job. It also alleges that Clinton offered one trooper a federal job in return for keeping the matter quiet.

The trooper later stated in the press that Clinton never offered him a job in exchange

for agreeing to hide his alleged affairs.

Brock states that, in addition to guarding Clinton's sex life, "the troopers functioned as chauffeurs, butlers, bodyguards, errand boys, and baggage handlers. They did everything for the Clintons, from receiving and placing telephone calls to changing bicycle tires and cleaning up after Socks the cat (who apparently retches with alarming frequency)."

Hillary Clinton responded by calling the accusations "outrageous, terrible stories that people plant for political and financial reasons." She said it was particularly "sad and unfortunate" that they would surface "especially during the Christmas season."

"The stories are just as they have been said," Bill Clinton told radio reporters December 22. "They are outrageous, and they are not so. We have not done anything wrong. The allegations on the abuse of the state or the Federal positions I have, it is not true."

Clinton's accusers are not the most savory bunch themselves. Brock explains in a footnote to his article that he and the troopers "signed a written agreement authorizing me to publish this piece in this magazine while protecting their right to sell a book later." Their lawyer, Cliff Jackson, is a self-described friend of the president who denounced Clinton as a draft dodger during the 1992 campaign. Brock is best known for writing a book denigrating Anita Hill, who accused Supreme Court nominee Clarence Thomas of sexual harassment in 1991.

Defending Clinton in the liberal magazine *New Republic*, Michael Kinsley wrote, "Are all the nasty stories retailed by the troopers false? Oh, probably some of them are true. The point is that the testimony of these patently unreliable sources doesn't make the stories any more likely to be true."

Right-wing columnist Patrick Buchanan is trying to use the scandal to push forward his own agenda to build a reactionary movement of ultrarightist cadre. "As the dirt flies Americans will begin thinking of alternatives — to both factions in Washington," he concluded in a December 29 commentary titled, "Into the swamp. Unsavory Clinton tale sinks American politics ever lower."

# Dozens of youth attend Pittsburgh conference

Students, unionists, and other activists at socialist meeting debate world politics

BY STEVE CRAINE

PITTSBURGH — At the close of a regional socialist educational conference held on New Year's weekend just outside Pittsburgh, Janine Dukes described her reaction to the three days of discussions at classes and other events saying, "It's amazing how much you can learn about politics when you're engaged in discussions with people who are telling the truth."

Dukes was presenting a report from the conference welcoming committee that reviewed the participation at the gathering. A student at Case Western Reserve University, she is a new member of the Cleveland branch of the Socialist Workers Party. Like many of the 150 people in attendance, Dukes was participating in her first socialist conference. Nearly a quarter of the participants were under 30 years old. Students from 12 colleges and 1 high school took part in the event, as did 71 trade unionists.

Six talks were presented during the conference, which was sponsored by seven SWP branches in the region along with the Toronto branch of the Communist League and the Young Socialist Organization of Edinboro, Pennsylvania. Each presentation was followed by lively discussion periods.

"I was really stimulated by seeing so

many ideas being shot back and forth," said Nathaniel Hitt, a student at the College of Wooster in Ohio. "Many of the questions I'd been grappling with on my own were being addressed by a large group here. I found that refreshing." Hitt is involved in environmental issues and is discussing starting a socialist discussion group at Wooster. He first met the SWP at an anti-Klan rally in Columbus.

## Capitalist system has got to go

Paul Mailhot, a member of the Socialist Workers Party National Committee, gave the feature presentation at a Militant Labor Forum Saturday evening. "Every now and then something happens that just makes you say, 'the capitalist system has got to go,'" he said to open his description of the impact of the world economic crisis on politics today.

"We've been seeing a story of this kind unfold over the last few days with the revelations of how the U.S. government conducted radiation experiments on workers and their children in the 1940s and '50s.

"But not everyone looks on this with the horror that most working people do," he noted. "The White House is mainly concerned with preventing the victims from



Militant/Dave Wulp

SWP leader Paul Mailhot

thinking they are entitled to compensation."

Mailhot explained that recently negotiated trade pacts — the North American Free Trade Agreement and General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade — are "really about imperialist powers trying to assert their domination over the world in the face of economic forces that are cutting into capitalist profits and plunging working people into deeper and deeper crisis."

Mailhot said that the only way out of this crisis for the capitalists is to defeat the working class in battle and prepare for a devastating war among the imperialist rivals.

The SWP leader concluded that working people are in a stronger position to resist the bosses' drive toward war than they were prior to the two world wars this century. "The working class is both larger and more international than ever before," he said. "It has greater social weight in most countries of the world, and is more multinational in composition in the most powerful capitalist countries."

Mailhot said that another factor making the working class stronger is that never before in history have women had the place in politics and in economic and social life they occupy today. Women continue to carve out a slightly higher percentage of the workforce. And despite setbacks, the rulers aren't anywhere close to being able to roll back women's right to abortion.

The working class has not been taken on in battle and defeated anywhere, Mailhot said. "There is no capitalist country today in which the working class has experienced the kinds of bloody blows and defeats it went through prior to World War II with the spread of fascist victories in Europe."

"And more important," the SWP leader said, "the great horror of Stalinism — which had a chokehold on the working class movement for decades and destroyed the possibility of workers conquering power in the 1920s and 1930s — the horror that blocked the working class from defending itself from the onslaught of fascism and finally made the slaughter of World War II inevitable, has been qualitatively weakened over the past decade."

## Cuban, South African revolutions

Another session of the conference was devoted to discussing the place of the Cuban revolution in world politics. Greg McCartan, a member of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU) in Washington, D.C., noted that "viewing Cuba in the context of what's going on in the rest of the world helps us see why crushing that revolution is so important to imperialism."

"The Cuban Communist Party is the first since the Bolsheviks to give revolutionary leadership to a workers and farmers government and to avoid it veering off onto some path that would not build socialism," he observed.

Conference participants contributed more than \$1,000 toward a fund to donate Pathfinder books to libraries and universities in Cuba. These books can play an important role in the burgeoning political discussions going on in that country today.

Advances in working class struggles in the rest of the world, McCartan pointed out, are necessary to enable the Cuban revolution to continue moving forward. "What we do here in defense of the Cuban socialist revolution will make a difference. It shows that Cuba is not alone."

McCartan urged everyone present to help build the U.S.-Cuba Friendship, which will involve people in dozens of cities across

the United States, Canada, and Mexico in collecting and delivering tons of aid to Cuba in February. A meeting during one of the meal breaks in the conference brought together about 50 people to discuss building the caravan.

The democratic revolution in South Africa is one of the most powerful forces proving the Cuban revolution is not alone. It was the topic of another class, led by Wendy Lyons, a member of the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union in Philadelphia.

"Our job," she said, "is to educate about what's been won in South Africa. The African National Congress [ANC] needs help in its campaign for the April elections."

Conference participants learned of plans for a regional conference in solidarity with the ANC that will be held at Temple University in Philadelphia February 12-13. Many took part in a discussion about how to make the meeting a success.

## Debate on child support

A lively exchange on the question of child support broke out in a class on a working-class approach to women's liberation. Some activists pointed to how the government uses campaigns against "dead-beat dads" to attack democratic rights. On the other hand, some participants said, child support was an important gain of the women's rights movement, making divorce a real option for many women.

The class, given by Estelle DeBates, also took up issues like date rape, adoption and child custody, and welfare. DeBates is a sewing machine operator and member of the ILGWU from Morgantown, West Virginia.

Garmeza Parks, a member of the United Auto Workers from Cleveland, presented a class on "Nationalism, nationalities, and the world struggle for socialism."

The conference was opened by a talk on the class struggle in the United States by John Cox from Pittsburgh. Cox analyzed recent strikes by coal miners and flight attendants at American Airlines as examples of the state of the labor movement today.

"The outcome of the miners' strike," he said, "is not an unqualified victory or defeat because many of the most important questions remain to be worked out in practice in the day to day struggles on the job."

The miners still have opportunities to resist the bosses' productivity drive, but, Cox noted, the strike showed how union strength has been eroded by the actions of the United Mine Workers of America leadership. Cox also observed that the coal strike was made more difficult by the lack of major fights going on in other unions and industries.

Many conference goers took advantage of the weekend to stock up their libraries, buying nearly \$600 worth of Pathfinder books. New titles such as *Nelson Mandela Speaks: Forging a Democratic, Nonracial South Africa* and *To See the Dawn: Baku 1920 First Congress of the Peoples of the East* were best-sellers. Books by Che Guevara, Fidel Castro, Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, V.I. Lenin, and Leon Trotsky also sold well, as did the Marxist magazine *New International*.

For many of the participants, the discussions at the conference were new. Kim Rickard is working to get Cuban youth leaders to speak at her campus, Hiram College in Ohio. She commented at the end of the weekend that the conference had touched on many of the questions she has had, and it provided answers that are totally different from what she usually hears.

Jack Willey, a student at Wayne State University in Detroit, joined the SWP in October. He said he appreciated the opportunity to meet other new members of the party and to "find so many other young people who are open to our ideas."

Damon Tinson has been part of the Student Political Organizing Committee (SPOC) at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis since it was founded last summer. Tinson, as well as another member of SPOC at the conference, asked to join the SWP. The Pittsburgh conference, Tinson said, "shows how collective political discussions can bring greater political understanding."

## Mollen commission report unveils rampant corruption in N.Y. police



Demonstrators protesting police killing of Héctor Rivera, a Puerto Rican immigrant living in Brooklyn, New York, in January 1992. Public hearings held last fall in New York City highlighted widespread corruption, other criminal activities, and the brutality perpetrated by cops in working class neighborhoods.

BY MIKE TABER

NEW YORK — An official investigative commission reported December 28 that corruption and lawlessness are widely tolerated inside the New York City Police Department (NYPD).

The findings were part of a preliminary report issued by the Mollen Commission, appointed in July 1992 by former mayor David Dinkins to refurbish the badly tarnished image of the police. Public hearings of the commission last September and October focused a spotlight on what many working people know from personal observation — that cops are routinely involved in burglary, extortion, drug trafficking, and other criminal activities.

"Our investigation revealed an anti-corruption system that was more likely to conceal corruption than uncover it and a department often more interested in the appearance of integrity than its reality," declared the commission, headed by Milton Mollen, former deputy mayor for public safety.

Singled out for special criticism was the Patrolmen's Benevolent Association (PBA). "The PBA often acts as a shelter for officers who commit acts of misconduct," the report stated.

The Mollen Commission concluded that these acts were confined to isolated pockets of "rogue" and "renegade" cops operating in "drug-cultured neighborhoods."

Testimony by witnesses at public hearings last fall, however, contradicts this finding. Former and active-duty police officers reported that up to 30 or 40 cops at a time regularly participated in shakedowns, break-ins, theft, drug dealing, and other crimes, with the knowledge and encouragement of their supervisors.

Much of the public testimony touched on the widespread police brutality in working-class neighborhoods. One former officer, Bernard Cawley, nicknamed "The Mechanic," testified to personally administering 300-400 "tune-ups" — beatings — and participating in cop gang rapes of women. Nevertheless, the Mollen Commission's preliminary report sidestepped the issue of police brutality.

Its main recommendations are the creation of an independent agency to monitor police corruption and an overhaul of the NYPD's Internal Affairs Department.

Newly inaugurated mayor Rudolph Giuliani has remained noncommittal about the commission's findings. Giuliani was elected with the active support of the PBA, which has assailed both the Mollen Commission's investigation and its findings. Outgoing police commissioner Raymond Kelly criticized the report, saying, "It besmirches the reputation of the department with a rather broad brush that I don't think is appropriate or warranted."

A final report is expected in April or May.

# Leon Trotsky on education and culture

We are reprinting below excerpts of a speech by Russian revolutionary leader Leon Trotsky. The address, titled "A few words on how to raise a human being," is part of the Pathfinder book *Problems of Everyday Life*.

Pathfinder is reissuing the book in early 1994 with an attractive new cover, featuring a four-color sketch of the Okhtensky Bridge in Petrograd (now St. Petersburg) by Russian painter Ksenia Boguslavskaya.

The book is a collection of articles by Trotsky on social and cultural issues in the struggle to create the foundations for a new society, written in the Soviet press in the years immediately following the October 1917 Russian revolution. Topics range from art, religion, and science to education and the fight for the emancipation of women.

Trotzky was a central leader of the Russian revolution. During the first few years after the victory of the Bolsheviks in 1917, he served as foreign minister of the Soviet government, head of the Red Army, convener of economic planning bodies, and a leader of the Communist International.

Following V.I. Lenin's death in 1924, Trotsky was the principal leader of the fight to defend the revolutionary course of the Bolsheviks. Expelled from the Soviet Union in 1929, Trotsky was assassinated in Mexico by Joseph Stalin's secret police in 1940.

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**BY LEON TROTSKY**

When I received the invitation to the meeting<sup>1</sup> to celebrate the first teaching year of the Karl Liebknecht<sup>2</sup> Institute, I found myself in a difficult position. Work in our Soviet Republic is becoming extraordinarily specialized, a larger and larger number of separate regions are being formed, and it is becoming increasingly difficult to keep up with a tenth or a hundredth, much less all, of this work with any degree of attention and conscientiousness.

When you have to speak about an establishment such as your institute, which is connected with a factory and workshop school, an establishment of exceptional importance, then you naturally find yourself in difficulties. I therefore ask you in advance not to expect a report on the significance and role of your Institute. I shall limit myself only to some considerations of principle, or more exactly considerations concerning the questions of principle that arise when one starts to think about the tasks of your Institute, and in general about the tasks of any education that strives to set up an unbreakable link between physical and mental labor.

In the preparatory class of socialism, we learned long ago that the main curse of

capitalist society consisted in the division between mental and physical labor. This division started before capitalism, with the first steps of the development of class society and culture; since that time, the task of management has become ever more bound up with mental labor and is operated through various categories of mental labor. In serving production, mental labor becomes separated from material production. This process goes on throughout the whole development of culture.

Capitalism puts mental and physical labor in the greatest contradiction, raising the division to an extraordinary degree of tension. Capitalism transforms physical labor into

Science is a part of the historical praxis of man; in its development it strives to grasp the world from all sides, to give an all-embracing orientation to creative man. The division of theory and practice cannot help striking at mental labor with one end of a broken chain, and at physical labor with the other end. We know this from the first pages of the first books about socialism. There we also learned that capitalism, bringing this contradiction to the highest degree of tension, ipso facto prepares the way for the reconciliation of mental and physical labor and for their union on the basis of collectivism.

Our socialist country is striving for the reconciliation of social and mental labor,

completely by ourselves.

The working class had to take power into its own hands so that there would be no political obstacles to the construction of the new society. But when it had won power, it found itself faced with another hindrance: poverty and lack of culture. Here is the difference between our position and the position of the proletariat in the advanced capitalist countries. On their road there is a direct obstacle: the bourgeois state, which allows only a definite area of proletarian activity, the area the ruling class considers permissible.

The first task in the West is to overthrow class rule, the bourgeois state. There, it is more difficult to solve this problem than here, for the bourgeois state is stronger there than here. But when it has overthrown class rule, the Western proletariat will find itself in a more favorable position with respect to cultural creation than ours.

If now we have run ahead by a few years, this does not at all mean that we shall get to the realm of socialism earlier than the English or German proletariat. No, that has not been proven. On the road to the kingdom of socialism there are a few trenches or barricades. We took the first barricade — the political one — earlier, but it is altogether possible that the Europeans will catch up on the second or third barricade. The economy, production, is the most difficult barricade, and only when we take it, when we raise the productive forces of socialism, will the cursed distinction between "worker" and "intellectual," which results from the fact that mental labor is separated from physical labor, disappear.

It is not at all impossible — on the contrary it is very probable — that the German proletariat, if it takes power into its hands in the next three years (I am speaking approximately), will with two or three jumps not only catch up with us, but even overtake us, because the "inherited" material basis for cultural creation is considerably richer there than here. Today the working class of Germany marches on paved roads, but its hands and feet are bound in class slavery. We walk in ruts, along ravines, but our hands and feet are free. And that, Comrades, typifies the difference between us and the European proletariat. Under the yoke of capital, it is now powerless even to start solving the problem of physical and mental labor. It does not have the power.

## When workers are the ruling class

State power is the material capability and the formal right to say to the subject class: there, you have the right to come up to this line, but no further — as we, the ruling class in our country, say to the NEPmen<sup>3</sup>. We are our own authority, but as soon as we look beneath our feet, there are puddles, holes, ditches of all sorts, and we hobble and stumble along; we move slowly. But the European proletariat, freed from the fetters on its hands and feet, will catch up to us; and we will of course welcome this, for they will help us, too, to get to the end of the matter.

I am saying this to point out that with just our own pedagogical measures we shall not complete the full solution of the basic problems of socialist education and the merging of physical with mental labor; but if we make a series of experiments on this road and reach partial successes, then that will already be an enormous plus both for us and for the European proletariat, who will be able to develop these partial successes on a wider scale. Thus, we must work along this road the more energetically, the more persistently, the more stubbornly.

In the field of pedagogics, i.e., in the field of the conscious cultivation of man, people have perhaps been learning even more blindly than in other fields. The social life of man had, as you know, an elemental character: human reason did not immediately start to work through, to think through social life. Peasant production, the peasant family, church life, the "patriarchal"-mon-



The literary car of the "V.I. Lenin" educational train that traveled throughout Soviet Central Asia in 1920 as part of an effort to raise the level of culture in the country.

repellent, automatic labor, and raises mental labor, at the highest level of generalization, into idealistic abstraction and mystical scholasticism.

### Separation of mental, physical labor

Here there seems to be a contradiction. You know that scholasticism arose from the church of the Middle Ages. Then, still in the depths of the old feudal society, natural science began to develop and fertilize production. Thus, the development of bourgeois society is closely linked with the development of natural science, and consequently with the struggle against church scholasticism.

But at the same time, the more the bourgeoisie grew, the more it feared the application of the methods of science to history, sociology, and psychology. In these fields, bourgeois thought wandered off ever higher into the region of idealism, abstraction, and a new scholasticism; and then, to cover up its traces, it began to introduce elements of idealism and scholasticism into natural science, too.

which is the only thing that can lead to the harmonious development of man. Such is our program. The program gives only general directions for this: it points a finger, saying "Here is the general direction of your path!"

But the program does not say how to attain this union in practice. It cannot say this, since no one could or even now can predict under what conditions, along what lines, socialism will be constructed in all countries and in each individual country, what the state of the economy will be, or by what methods the younger generation will be educated — precisely — in the sense of combining physical and mental labor. In this field, as in many others, we shall go and are going already by way of experience, research, and experiments, knowing only the general direction of the road to the goal: as correct as possible a combination of physical and mental labor.

### Lack of culture

This factory and workshop school is interesting in that it is one of the practical attempts at a partial solution of this colossal social and educational problem. I do not mean by this that the problem has already been solved or that the solution is very near. On the contrary, I am convinced that to reach the goal we still have considerably further to go than the small distance we have already gone. If we could say that through the factory and workshop school we were actually approaching the combination of mental and physical labor, that would mean that we had already gone perhaps three-quarters or even more of the way to establishing socialism. But there is still a long, long way to go to that.

A precondition for combining physical and mental labor is the destruction of class rule. In outline we have done this; power here is in the hands of the workers. But it was only when the working class had taken power into its hands that it understood for the first time how poor and how backward we still are, or, as the Russian critic Pisarev once said, how "poor and stupid" we are. By the word stupidity here we must understand simply cultural backwardness, since by nature we are not stupid at all, and when we have had time to learn we shall stand

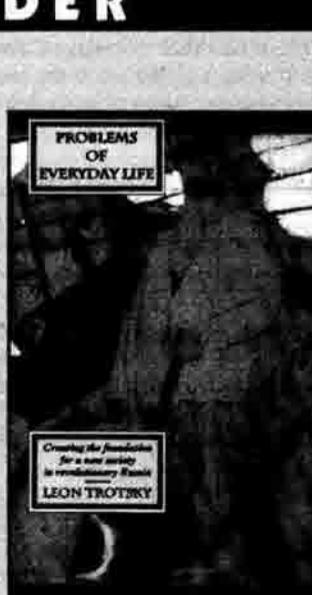
## FROM PATHFINDER

### Problems of Everyday Life

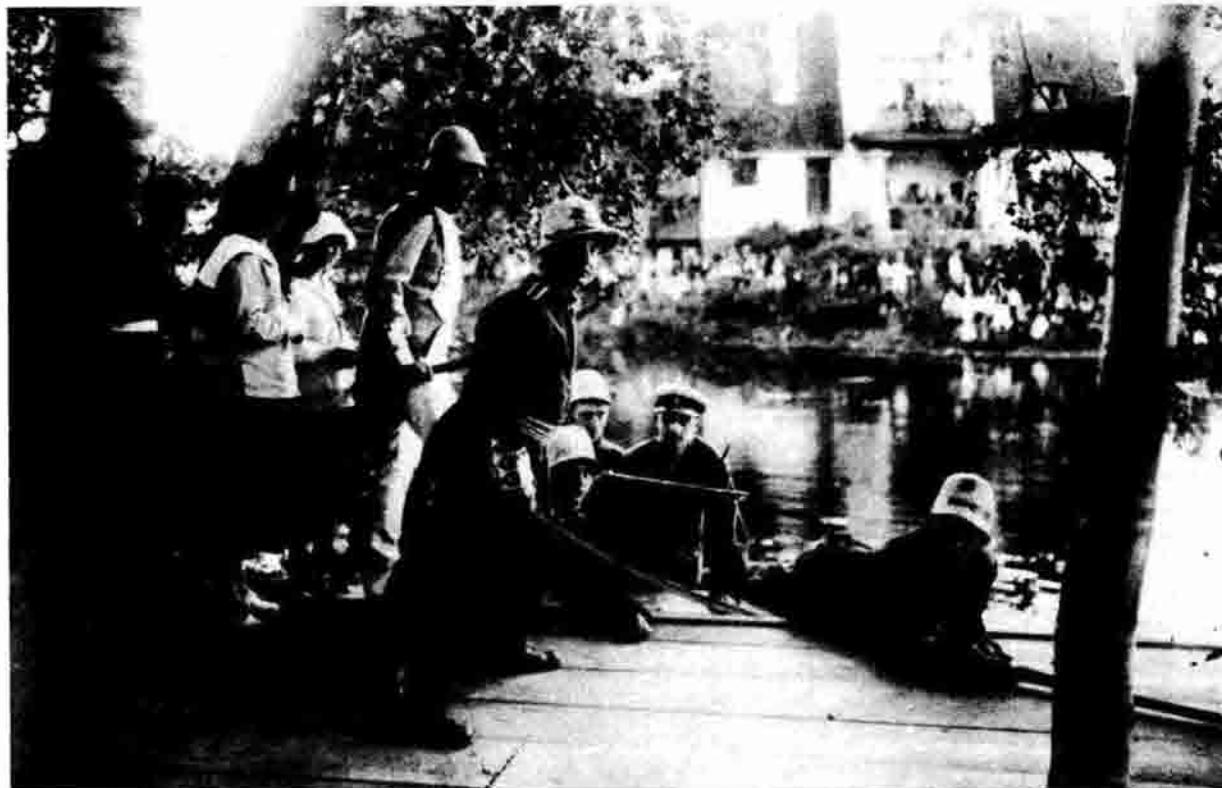
CREATING THE FOUNDATIONS FOR A NEW SOCIETY IN REVOLUTIONARY RUSSIA

BY LEON TROTSKY

Articles on social and cultural issues, written for the Soviet press in the years immediately following the October 1917 revolution. Topics covered range from art, religion, science, and cinema to the education of youth and the emancipation of women. \$24.95



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A theatrical performance in 1920 on the Island of Rest, a workers' vacation center near Leningrad, Russia.

archic state forms were laid down behind people's backs imperceptibly, over hundreds and thousands of years. Only at a certain level, and especially with the appearance of the natural sciences, did people begin to organize production consciously, not according to tradition, but according to planned design (of course, not on a social scale, but on a private one). Then they began to criticize the class structure and the royal power, to demand equality and democracy.

Democracy meant the application of the reason of the young and still fresh bourgeoisie to the cause of the construction of the state. Thus, critical thought was transferred from questions of natural science and technology to the state. But social relations in the broad sense continued under the rule of the bourgeoisie to be laid down spontaneously. The proletariat arose spontaneously against capitalist spontaneity. Then conscious criticism arose. On this the theory of socialism was built.

What is socialist construction? It is economic construction according to reason, no longer only within the limits of the enterprise or trust, as under the rule of the bourgeoisie, but within the limits of the society, and then of all humanity. In socialism we have the application of scientific thought to the construction of human society. Just as earlier the bourgeoisie built factories "according to reason," and constructed its state according to (bourgeois) reason, so the working class says: "I will construct the whole of social life from top to bottom according to reason."

But man himself is also an elemental thing. Only gradually does he apply the criticism of reason to himself. The effect of education on man went, as we said, unseen. Only under a socialist society will the conditions for a scientific approach to man be established. And man needs such an approach. For what is man? Not at all a finished and harmonious being; no, his being is still very incoherent. In him there is not only the vestige of the appendix, which is no use to him — only appendicitis comes from it — but also, if you take his psyche, then you will find there as many unnecessary "vestiges" as you like, from which come all sorts of illnesses, all sorts of spiritual appendicitis.

#### Contradictions of humankind

Man, as a type of animal, developed under natural conditions, not according to plan, but spontaneously, and accumulated many contradictions in himself. One of these serious contradictions, not only social but physiological, is reflected in the sexual process, which has a disturbing effect on the young. The problem of how to cultivate and adjust, how to improve and "finish" the physical and spiritual nature of man, is a colossal one, serious work on which is conceivable only under conditions of socialism. We may be able to drive a railway across the whole Sahara, build the Eiffel Tower, and talk with New York by radio, but can we really not improve man? Yes; we will be able to!

To issue a new "improved edition" of man — that is the further task of communism. But for this it is necessary as a start to know man from all sides, to know his anatomy, his physiology, and that part of his physiology which is called psychology.

Vulgar philistines say that socialism is a structure of total stagnation. Rubbish, the crassest rubbish! Only with socialism does real progress begin. Man will look for the first time at himself as if at raw material, or at best, as at a half-finished product, and say: "I've finally got to you, my dear *homo sapiens*; now I can get to work on you,

friend!" To perfect man's organism, using the most varied combinations of methods, to regulate the circulation of the blood, to refine the nervous system, and at the same time to temper and strengthen it, make it more flexible and harder — what a gigantic and fascinating task!

But this, of course, is the music of the future. What we have to do is lay the first stones in the foundations of socialist society. And the cornerstone is to increase the productivity of labor. Only on this basis can socialism develop. For each new social structure conquers because it increases the productivity of human labor.

We will only be able to talk of a real, complete, and invincible victory of socialism when the unit of human power gives us more products than under the rule of private property. One of the most important means to this is the education of cultivated, qualified workers. Such education is now taking place here in this factory and workshop school. To what extent will these schools solve the problem of preparing a "change" in production? I shall not go into that question. That needs the serious test of experience. But let us impress on our memories the fact that the fate of our economy, and hence of our state, depends on the solution of this problem.

#### Conscious builders, not robots

The education of qualified workers is one side of the matter; the education of citizens is the other. The socialist republic needs not robots of physical labor, but conscious builders. The educated man of the land of workers and peasants, whatever he may be by profession, with a narrow or broad specialization, must also be armed in one other field. This is the social field.

Nothing protects one from the humiliating effect of specialization so well as the Marxist method, as Leninism, i.e., the method of understanding the conditions of the society in which you live, and the method of acting upon those conditions. And when we try to understand the relations between states, we again need the same method of Marxism-Leninism. Without the understanding of the connections between the private and the social, there can be no educated man.

The basic peculiarity of petty-bourgeois thought is that it is specialized in its own narrow sphere, locked in its own closet. There are learned bourgeois intellectuals who, even though they write learned books a thousand pages thick, still go on looking at questions separately, each for itself, without connections, and thus they remain limited petty bourgeois.

One must be able to take every question in its development and in its connections with other questions; then the conclusions are so much the more guaranteed to be right. This guarantee is given only by the Marxist school. And therefore whatever the speculation, passing through the school of Leninism is essential for every educated worker, and especially for every future teacher.

The school of Leninism is a school of revolutionary action. "I am a citizen of the first workers' and peasants' republic in the world" that consciousness is the precondi-

tion of all the rest. And for us that consciousness is a requirement of self-preservation. We would be utopians, wretched dreamers, or dreamy wretches, if we began to think that we are assured for all eternity of a peaceful development for socialism. Not at all! In the international sense things have become for us, that is unquestionable. But do you think, Comrades, that the more the communist movement develops in Europe, the more we will be insured against the dangers of war? Anyone who thinks that is wrong. A dialectical approach is necessary here. While the Communist Party remains more or less dangerous, but not yet frightening, the bourgeoisie, being wary of giving it nourishment, will seek truces with us; but when the Communist Party of a given country becomes a threatening force, when the water starts to come up to the neck of the bourgeoisie, then the danger will grow again for us, too.

It was not for nothing that Vladimir Ilyich warned that we shall still be faced with having to go through a new explosion of the furious hatred of world capital for us. Of

course, if we were an isolated state, or the only one in the world, then after conquering power we would have built socialism by a peaceful path. But we are only a part of the world, and the world that surrounds us is still stronger than we are. The bourgeoisie will not give up its position without cruel fights, considerably more cruel than the ones we have already been through.

The attacks from the bourgeoisie will take on a fierce character again when the Communist parties start to grow above the head of the bourgeoisie. It would therefore be an unforgivable piece of thoughtlessness to suppose that we will pass to socialism without wars and upheavals. No, they won't let us do that. We'll have to fight. And for that we need hardness, education in the spirit of revolutionary valor. The name that is written on the walls of your Institute — Karl Liebknecht — must not have been written in vain. . . .

#### NOTES

1. A speech to the anniversary meeting of the Karl Liebknecht Institute delivered on June 24, 1924. Translated for this volume from Trotsky's *Problems of Cultural Work* (1924), by Iain Fraser.

2. Karl Liebknecht (1871-1919) was a leader of the German Social Democracy who opposed World War I and was jailed, along with Rosa Luxemburg, for his antiwar activity. He was freed by the November 1918 uprising and assassinated by officers of the German Social Democratic government in January 1919.

3. The New Economic Policy (NEP) was initiated in 1921 to replace "military communism," which had prevailed during the civil war and which had led to conflict between the government and the peasants as industrial production declined drastically and grain was requisitioned and confiscated from the peasants. NEP was adopted as a temporary measure to revise the economy after the civil war, and allowed a limited revival of free trade inside the Soviet Union, and foreign concessions alongside the nationalized sectors of the economy. The NEPmen — traders, merchants, and other who took advantage of the opportunities for profitmaking under NEP — were viewed as a potential base for restoring capitalism.



## PATHFINDER AROUND THE WORLD

BY MIKE TABER

Pathfinder, located in New York with distributors in Australia, Britain, and Canada, publishes the writings and speeches of working-class and communist leaders of the worldwide struggles against exploitation and oppression. Pathfinder bookstores are listed in the directory on page 12.

The Pathfinder Bookstore in Atlanta offered members of the Pathfinder Readers Club a special discount for the holidays. New members of the Readers Club who signed up to take advantage of the offer include a meatpacker, an immigrant worker from Ethiopia, and two others from Haiti.

The latter "pretty much depleted our French titles," reports bookstore staffer Miguel Zárate, "and we were forced to restock titles like *Wage Labor and Capital*, *State and Revolution*, *Imperialism*, and all four volumes of *Nouvelle Internationale*."

Nelson Mandela Speaks: Forging a Democratic, Nonracial South Africa, Pathfinder's newest title, is included in the Bookshelf section of the January issue of *Ebony*. In New Zealand, a review of the new book was featured on the nationwide radio news program "Morning Report" and on Radio Aotearoa, a national radio station oriented to Maori listeners.

Pathfinder distributors in London report that in a matter of weeks after its publication, they sold more than 750 copies of *Nelson Mandela Speaks*.

The computer network Peacenet picked up the review of the collection of speeches and interviews with the president of the African National Congress by journalist Earl Caldwell that appeared in the November 26 *New York Daily News*.

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A political activist in Turkey recently ordered 20 copies of the Pathfinder book *The Truth About Yugoslavia: Why Working People Should Oppose Intervention* for sale to other activists there. *The Truth About Yugoslavia* argues that the war in the former Yugoslavia is a product of the crisis and intensifying conflicts of the depression-ridden world capitalist system, in which rival gangs of would-be capitalists — fragments of the former Stalinist regime — drape themselves in nationalist colors in a war for territory and resources.

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Many Pathfinder titles are used as textbooks for college and university courses. Recent classroom adoptions include *The Revolution Betrayed* by Leon Trotsky at Pace University in Pleasantville, New York, and at Northern Illinois University in De Kalb, Illinois; *The Communist Manifesto* by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels at Memphis State University in Memphis, Tennessee, and *Nelson Mandela Speaks* at Pacific Lutheran University in Tacoma, Washington.

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"I just read Malcolm X on Afro-American History," writes an enlisted man at sea in the U.S. Navy. "I really enjoyed it and am very interested in reading more of your books. Please send me a list of other books you have in stock, with the cost of each."

The new 1994 Pathfinder catalog is just off the press and one of the first copies will go to this sailor. To get your copy, visit your local Pathfinder bookstore or contact Pathfinder, 410 West Street, New York, NY 10014, (212) 741-0690.

# Farmers in the Midwest face loss of land

BY JON HILLSON

MINNEAPOLIS — Thousands of farmers in Minnesota face 1994 with a growing fear that the new year may be their last one on the land.

Devastated by more than a billion dollars in crop losses, compounded by inadequate government relief programs, many of this state's rural producers have received "just enough [federal aid] to keep them hoping," according to Delores Swoboda, a leader of Groundswell, a family farm organization based in Wanda, Minnesota.

Farmers, she said, "are finishing up from fall, cleaning up machinery, and are just plain tired. People in urban areas, in the cities, think we're getting everything we need, but that's just wrong."

Swoboda reported that in one seven-day period in early December, nearly 1,100 farmers visited or called the Groundswell office seeking answers in the newest round of the crisis facing working farmers.

In the same time span, she fielded nearly 100 visits from rural producers at the Swoboda house in Redwood Falls, which, with bottomless cups of coffee, also serves as an informal Groundswell branch office. The farm has been in the family of Gene Swoboda, Delores's husband, for a century.

The reasons for what Delores Swoboda calls "a nightmare for farmers" in Minnesota are clear.

- Unprecedented rains and river flooding that either prevented planting or drowned already seeded farmland.

- An unusual, early fall frost in September that killed still viable crops before harvest.

- \$802 million in lost corn production, \$310 million in ruined soybean crop, and \$78 million in failed wheat harvest.

- Only one in three corn farmers are covered by crop insurance.

- Unavailability of credit and low interest loans for 1994 planting.

Government news releases, Swoboda said, "make it sound like [federal programs] are working just fine."

Instead, many farmers are trying to figure out, with little success, how to borrow money for fertilizer, chemicals, and seed for the upcoming season after a 1993 crop that for many farmers meant a year without net income.

While the Farmers Home Administration (FmHA), the federal farm lending agency, is advertising loans, she said, "you can't get any money from them unless you mortgage everything you've got, or you're already



The remains of a home crushed by flooding of the Mississippi River in mid-1993. Unprecedented rains and river flooding prevented planting or drowned already seeded farmland in many areas throughout Minnesota.

borrowed into them."

A farmer who needs money but who is indebted to a local bank has to get the FmHA to loan enough to pay off the bank note in order to qualify for a loan for the upcoming planting season.

"And that's just about impossible," the Groundswell leader said, leaving farmers "unable to pay operating loans [from previous years]. Then, what happens come February when you have to buy inputs?"

More than 14,000 farmers and migrant workers from Minnesota's 88,000 farms filed for unemployment insurance in a first-time ever program the government claimed would provide relief from the impact of the flooding, according to Department of Employment researcher Don Hilbert. Benefits range from \$36 to \$305 a week.

More than 6,000 farmers and 3,300 migrant workers have been approved for payments. But that figure is a fraction of what it might have been, had the program been publicized. Many farmers, Swoboda said, "didn't know about the program, applied too late, or were disqualified."

Groundswell went on a public campaign that helped extend the filing deadline for rural applicants.

In general, Hilbert said, only one person per farm qualifies for the plan. This excludes farm spouses and children, whose labor is often decisive in family farming. Farmers who took advantage of one-time tax allow-

ances for machinery purchased in 1992 were disqualified as well.

As winter sets in, Groundswell is organizing farmers bereft of aid to get food stamps and fuel assistance.

Some farmers on flood-ravaged land tried to use the zero-92 provision of the 1985 farm bill "safety net," which pays for not planting or for plowing under crops.

But this approach was a double-edged sword, Swoboda said. "You had to decide by a certain time to sign on to it, and if you still hoped for a crop and didn't apply, and the crop failed, you missed out on everything. The whole thing was baloney."

## Crop insurance

Crop insurance, which provides limited coverage of planted land, was a mixed blessing, at best. Without the insurance, the Groundswell leader said, their farm, which produces corn, soybean, wheat, and oats, "wouldn't have had a darn thing. It's the thread that keeps us hanging on."

This dollop of relief surpasses what was available to farmers in the ruinous drought of 1988. "Maybe it was because cities got flooded and everything was on television," she said, "but you didn't hear anything [in 1988] and we didn't get a dime."

Jim Saarf, who raises cattle in Eagle Bend in northern Minnesota, agrees. Heavy rains kept him from planting corn on 120 acres but a remaining 180 acres were insured. "We didn't get a good kernel" from that land, he said.

While Saarf lost thousands of dollars of potential income, he was at least able to harvest the substandard corn for feed. Other cattle farmers, he said, "had to import [purchase] feed," financially weakening them even further.

"If we'd have gotten the same kind of treatment we got during the drought under the Bush administration, a lot of us would have gone under by now. Thank God we got Bush out of there," said Saarf, who at 42 is one of the youngest members of the National Farm Organization's board of directors.

Pressures from the FmHA to pay off loans, Saarf said, have gone "right up to foreclosure and then stopped. Those people are in limbo."

That pressure continues to mount, as payments on debts, particularly to rural banks, remain unpaid. Sooner than later, farmers say, these banks will call the notes due.

For Grace Sellner's dairy farm, near Sleepy Eye, in southern Minnesota, crop insurance was part of the disaster. "We weren't as hard hit [with rain and floods] as other places," Sellner said, describing the conditions on the farm that has been in the family more than 100 years.

Still, only 70 percent of the farm's 450 acres of corn, soybean, oats, and alfalfa survived the downpours to harvest.

"We were insured for a 35 percent loss, so we didn't get anything," Sellner said. If that threshold had been reached, she explained, the insurance would cover only a fraction of the ruined crops, "since there's a 20 percent deductible to begin with."

Farmers whose hay crop was wrecked by rain may "have to sell their cattle because

the price of milk is too low to afford [the additional cost of] feed," she said. Luckily, the family operation gets enough feed because a son who farms provided them with hay.

Additionally, hay and corn feed heavy with moisture have resulted in a drop in milk production.

"We are going to see a lot of farmers sitting on the edge this winter," stated Bill Coleman, head of the Dairy and Livestock Division of the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, in a recent news article in the Minneapolis *Star Tribune*.

He predicted that about 1,000 of the state's 14,000 dairy farmers will not last out the next few months.

Sellner said the grim outlook is accurate. "The farm advocates [state supported farm resource personnel] here say they can't take even one more call," she explained. "It's just too much for them. Some of the older farmers will just sell off the cattle and leave."

In the new year, she predicts, "a real rash [of auctions and foreclosures] is going to hit a lot of people, like a second wave out of the flood. It's very frustrating with all the paperwork, and trying to figure out what to do, but we'll keep going. We've got a son to help us out."

To top off these blows, the federal government is now trying to force farmers to return monies provided in 1993 advance deficiency payments.

These federal stipends make up the difference between established target prices for crops and what those commodities actually fetch at the market.

The disbursements, made prior to the results of the floods, are based on the historic yields of farmers' crops.

Because many farmers did not plant or did not harvest due to rains and flooding, the government is pressing for a return of the payment.

But such funds, given the economic beating farmers here have taken and the insufficiency of aid programs, have already been spent to meet routine farm upkeep costs and the pressing financial needs of the 1994 planting season.

"Farmers have suffered enough financially during this long year," stated an editorial in *Agri-News*, a Midwest farm newsweekly published in southern Minnesota. "The government doesn't need to add to their burden by demanding repayment of advanced deficiency."

Instead, the journal's editors proposed Department of Agriculture head Mike Espy postpone "the payback until next fall" or that the requirement be voided altogether.

"This may take Congressional action," the *Agri-News* editorial stated, "but a disaster of

Continued on Page 11

## Iowa farm activists demand gov't protection from crisis

BY NORTON SANDLER

DES MOINES, Iowa — Farm activists from the American Agricultural Movement (AAM) protested December 16 at the state capitol here.

Farmers demanded the state government take action to raise the prices rural



Militant/Barbara Bowman  
Carroll Nearmyer (left) and Dan Schmidt at December 16 farm protest.

producers across the state get for their crops and the creation of decent-paying jobs in the rural areas, said Iowa AAM president Dan Schmidt.

The activists also insisted the state legislative subcommittee on agriculture open to the public its hearing that day on the topic of rural economic development. A cross-section of farmers wanted to testify at it.

"This whole economic development scam has the politicians scrambling to get more money into the state till," Schmidt said. "Meanwhile, the poor farmer has been eroded to where there is nothing left."

"When they talk about rural development," farm activist Carroll Nearmyer said, "they have to go back to the farm gate where it all begins. We need a decent price for what we're producing, the same as working men and women need to be paid a decent rate for their work."

Larry Ginter, a corn and hog producer from Rhodes added, "We are demanding awareness about what really creates wealth. It's not only farmers producing commodities but labor that is a part of the same struggle. If we have justice for the farmers and justice for the workers we could get rid of this debt that is strangling people."

The farmers were joined at the protest by a handful of Des Moines trade unionists. The action was covered by the local ABC television affiliate.

## FROM PATHFINDER

### FARMERS FACE THE CRISIS OF THE 1990s

BY DOUG JENNESS

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# Yellowknife bosses fail to break union after 18-month strike

BY NED DMYTRYSHYN  
AND JOE YOUNG

**Y**ELLOWKNIFE, North West Territories — After 18 months on strike against Royal Oak Mines, members of the Canadian Association of Smelter and Allied Workers union (CASAW) Local 4 are going back to work with a contract and the union intact at the gold mine. At the same time a frame-up campaign against three workers continues.

The main issues in the strike were the company's attempt to cut back safety inspections, its disciplining of injured workers, and attempts to roll back seniority rights.

Royal Oak hired replacement workers and used a cop presence and police violence to try to bust the union. This included a campaign to get CASAW decertified and replaced with an "association."

Unionists from across Canada and internationally gave support to the CASAW strikers, whose fight became the most important labor battle in the country. It came at a time when strike activity in Canada hit the lowest point in 50 years.

"I don't think they want any unions in the north while companies are developing mines," said striker Corey Wells. "This lasted so long because she [Royal Oak owner Peggy Witte] had support from the

## Midwest farmers face loss of land

Continued from Page 10  
this magnitude requires special action."

Stan Pankratz of Mountain Lake, in southern Minnesota, stopped farming his land this year, and rented out the acreage that's been in his family for more than 100 years.

The farm came up with "the worst yield in my 55 years here," he said. The zero-92 program "was never designed for disaster relief."

By paying farmers not to farm, the program benefits the richest farmers and corporate agriculture. With more land unused they can more easily monopolize production.

To get into the program, family farmers have to first come up with an accurate prediction of the estimated crop yield for payment to the government's satisfaction, Pankratz explained.

But if their prediction exceeds the yield they plowed under, they must pay the difference to the government and are disqualified from the program.

And, Pankratz pointed out, "to decide to plow under is very difficult morally for farmers. It's something you hate to do, to not plant, to plow under."

Now, working farmers in his area are "really up against it. They have no idea what will happen next. They're 'living on the come,'" Pankratz said. "You know, a better harvest will come, a better time will come."

Pankratz said he and his wife Eileen no longer want to "live on the come." With their children grown, they're trying to sell the land and quit farming.

The economic impact of the crisis has made finding buyers hard. But Pankratz is determined to sell rather than face another year of difficulty making a living on the land.

"I'm disillusioned with the American system of agriculture," he said. "The transnationals [multinational corporations] control everything. They own the chemicals, fertilizers, seed, and machinery. They contract for the crop. They're the food processors and own the packinghouses."

"They still 'let' us raise grain because it's cheaper for them," he continued, "and then they pay us below the cost of production. They squeeze us every way they can. They treat us like Third World farmers. You're just overwhelmed by the exploitation."

*Jon Hillson is a rail worker in St. Paul, Minnesota, and a member of the United Transportation Union.*

government, the RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police], and companies that don't want unions. But they couldn't break us because we hung on and got support from unions down south." Wells was recalled to work December 1 with 29 other union members. As CASAW members get recalled replacement workers are laid off.

On December 21, additional CASAW members who work underground began returning to work. Twenty-seven CASAW members who had crossed the picket line are also being recalled. During the strike 47 workers found other jobs and do not plan to return to the mine. The strike began with 240 unionists.

The Canada Labor Relations Board (CLRB) ruled November 11 that the company had not bargained in good faith and issued a back-to-work protocol. An attempt by Royal Oak to get a stay of the ruling was turned down by the Federal Court of Appeal on December 21. CASAW will now remain the bargaining unit at Royal Oak Mines for the next three years.

On November 16, 96 percent of CASAW members present voted to accept the CLRB recommendation, which the company was ordered to present to the union. The decision gave federal commissioners Don Munroe and Vince Ready the authority to deal with outstanding issues and impose a contract.

The commissioners ruled that wages for returning workers will remain the same as at the time of the strike. Wages for replacement workers hired as helpers since the beginning of the strike will start at \$14 an hour. Under the old contract helpers are paid \$19 an hour. The number of days a month allotted for safety inspections will remain as in the old contract: four below ground and two above. At the end of the three-year contract the commissioners will have the authority to impose another one. The 52 unionists fired during the strike will have their cases go to expedited arbitration.



CASAW

Three CASAW members remain in jail on trumped-up charges. Above, Royal Canadian Mounted Police at Royal Oak Mine, shortly before cops assaulted strikers June 14, 1992.

CASAW member Terry Legge said in an interview that the mine owners "didn't break the union but we didn't win anything. We gained a lot in terms of solidarity."

At the union hall, CASAW member Bill Dyke, a seven-year scoop operator at Royal Oak's Giant Mine, who is scheduled to go back to work December 21, explained that members will be giving two hours pay per month to the 100 workers on strike at Alcan in Vancouver who are also CASAW members. "We don't forget the solidarity that we received," commented Dyke.

Three unionists framed-up during the strike have been held in the Yellowknife Correctional Centre without bail since mid-October.

On October 16, the RCMP arrested and charged CASAW member Roger Warren with nine counts of first degree murder in the death of nine replacement workers who were killed by an explosion in the mine Sept. 18, 1992. Warren's preliminary inquiry is set for February 14.

Two other strikers, Tim Bettger and Al Shearing, were arrested October 18 and charged a week later with a series of offenses, including setting an explosive de-

vice, possession of a prohibited weapon, and uttering threats to cause death in incidents unrelated to the explosion that killed the replacement workers.

CASAW members believe that the accused are facing a justice system that has consistently supported the mine owners against the union. The right to presumption of innocence has been violated. CASAW member Alexander Mikus said, "I've worked with Roger [Warren] for 12 years. I don't believe he did this. Why haven't the RCMP investigated seriously the fact that I saw a white pickup truck with Saskatchewan plates coming out of the mine at 4:00 a.m. the morning of the explosion. Roger was a person to calm people on the picket line."

Warren is "a scapegoat," stated Legge. "There is no justice system. Or, there is one but it is for another group of people."

There are important stakes for the labor movement in defending the framed CASAW members.

*Ned Dmytryshyn is a laid-off member of Teamsters Local 213 and Joe Young is a member of United Steelworkers of America Local 3495 in Vancouver, British Columbia.*

## Southern textile workers gain new contract

BY SUSAN LAMONT

**C**OLUMBUS, Georgia — Members of the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union (ACTWU) at Fieldcrest Cannon ratified a new three-year contract with the company in late November. The contract is the largest single textile agreement, covering some 4,500 workers at plants in Fieldale, Virginia; Eden, North Carolina; Columbus, Georgia; and Phenix City, Alabama.

Fieldcrest Cannon is one of the five largest textile manufacturers in the United States, employing about 17,000 workers, the majority at nonunion mills. The company dominates the towel market and produces bedding as well.

The new contract forced the company back from its worst concession demands. It came as a result of a seven-month fight that followed union members' overwhelming rejection of the company's final contract offer last April. At that time the bosses insisted on limiting union members' right to strike, more forced overtime and subcontracting, putting more jobs on 12-hour shifts, a ban on smoking inside the plants, no wage increase, and other concessions.

ACTWU members also demanded back pay dating from 1991, totaling \$2.5 million; a wage increase; maintaining the grievance procedure and right to strike; changes in contract language to protect employees' wages; and provisions to guarantee that jobs would not be lost if the company was sold.

For months unionists campaigned to win a decent contract and force Fieldcrest Cannon to back off its concessionary drive. Workers at the North Carolina and Virginia plants carried out one- and two-day "unfair labor practices" strikes in May to protest the firing of union leader Laverne Lambeth from an Eden, North Carolina, plant.

The union organized rallies and press conferences to gain public support for its fight. ACTWU members carried out in-plant actions, walked off the job, filed mass grievances, held meetings, produced dozens of

leaflets and stickers, and generally kept the heat on Fieldcrest Cannon, letting the company know that union members were not going to give up and give in.

Reese Boulware, district manager of ACTWU's South Georgia district, reported that the newly ratified contract includes provisions for an immediate 1 percent wage raise, as part of the back pay owed to the unionists since 1991, when Fieldcrest Cannon awarded a wage increase at its nonunion mills and denied the same pay at its union facilities.

More back pay is subject to further talks, as is the in-plant smoking issue. Negotiations for an actual wage increase are set to begin in January. Other provisions of the new contract include allowing union members the right to strike for up to eight hours;

maintaining the grievance procedure; paying overtime to 12-hour shift workers after 36 hours; and limiting overtime to two Saturdays in a row, down from the current three.

"This contract was a victory for the union," said Earl Moore, vice-president of ACTWU Local 1855B at Fieldcrest Cannon's towel mill in Columbus, Georgia. Moore is a drawing frame cleaner and has worked at the mill for 13 years.

"Fieldcrest Cannon didn't just give us the 1 percent [back pay]," he continued, "they had to acknowledge that they broke the law. This was a result of our people standing strong and fighting."

*Susan LaMont is a member of ACTWU Local 365 in Austell, Georgia.*

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## U.S. campaign against N. Korea

Continued from front page  
clear weapons. A few weeks later the CIA charged that Pyongyang had already made at least one such bomb. This claim was publicly disputed by both the South Korean government and officials at the U.S. State Department.

Pyongyang has repeatedly stated that its nuclear program is only for peaceful energy development and it is not involved in building atomic bombs.

In his New Year address, Kim Il Sung, president of the DPRK, stated, "It is the United States that has created the fictitious 'doubt about nuclear development by the north,' and it is the United States that has actually shipped nuclear weapons into the Korean peninsula and has been threatening us."

### No inspection of U.S. bases

There have been no inspections of U.S. bases or other nuclear installations in South Korea, where Washington maintains 35,000 troops. The Korean peninsula has been divided since the end of the U.S.-led Korean war in 1953.

Last March, the DPRK government threatened to pull out of the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty following the resumption of the "Team Spirit" joint military exercises by U.S. and South Korean forces. These maneuvers, which are essentially a practice invasion of North Korea, had been called off in 1992 after the governments of North and South Korea signed an agreement calling for mutual inspection of nuclear sites. Seoul felt obligated to support this pact because of the mass sentiment among working people in the south for reunification with the north.

Pyongyang allowed six inspections of its nuclear facilities, but the military exercises were resumed after the International Atomic Energy Agency demanded access to additional sites in North Korea. DPRK government officials say these are military installations that are unrelated to nuclear production.

The governments of China, Japan, and South Korea have been reluctant to support Washington's moves toward a military confrontation with North Korea. Chinese officials have publicly stated their opposition to employing economic sanctions while calling for the entire Korean peninsula to be a non-nuclear zone.

Many of the 750,000 Koreans living in Japan are strongly opposed to a foreign policy threatening military action against the DPRK, or to any efforts to cut off economic ties between the two countries.

### Japan maintains trade relations

In fact, Japan remains the only capitalist country to maintain significant trade relations with North Korea. In 1991, Japan ranked second only to China in trade with Pyongyang, with a total volume of \$481 million — including imports of fish, minerals, and textiles, as well as exports of machinery and textile materials. Eighty percent of this trade is conducted by Koreans living in Japan.

While Washington moves toward a negotiated agreement with the government of the DPRK, commentators in the big-business press continue to beat the drums for a military solution. One such example is a January 5 column in the *Wall Street Journal* entitled "Korea, Clinton's Cuban Missile Crisis," by Karen House, an international vice-president of Dow Jones. House calls for "putting in place now a total embargo of North Korea, including a naval blockade by U.S. and Japanese warships. The time to do this is yesterday."

## CALENDAR

### ALABAMA

#### Birmingham

**Abortion Rights Rally.** Celebrate the 21st Anniversary of the Roe vs. Wade Decision. Speakers: David Gunn Jr., pro-choice activist; Mary Jones, Mayor's Commission on Women. Sat., Jan. 22, 1 p.m. Kelly Ingram Park (6th Avenue and 16th Street North). Sponsored by Birmingham Clinic Defense Team, Greater Birmingham National Organization for Women, Alabamians for Choice. For more information, call (205) 930-9663.

## MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

### ALABAMA

#### Birmingham

**Clinton's First Year: A Year of Attacks on Working People and Democratic Rights.** Speaker: Kay Sedam, Socialist Workers Party, member of United Steelworkers of America Local 2122. Sat., Jan. 15, 7:30 p.m. 111 21st St. S. Donation: \$3. Tel: (205) 323-3079.

### CALIFORNIA

#### Los Angeles

**What Was the Civil Rights Movement? Lessons for Today.** Speaker: Nelson Blackstock, participant in southern civil rights movement, author of *Workers in a Changing South and Cointelpro: The FBI's Secret War on Political Freedom*, and member of Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Jan. 15, 7:30 p.m. 2546-C W. Pico Blvd. Donation: \$4. Translation into Spanish. Tel: (213) 380-9460.

### GEORGIA

#### Atlanta

**The gains of the Civil Rights Movement: Its Lessons for Today.** Speaker: Bob Braxton, Socialist Workers Party, member of United Auto Workers Local 882. Sat., Jan. 15, 7:30 p.m. 172 Trinity Ave. SW. Donation: \$3. Tel: (404) 577-4065.

**How the Fight for Abortion Rights Was Won.** Speaker: Susan LaMont, Socialist Workers Party, member of Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union Local 365. Sat., Jan. 22, 7:30 p.m. 172 Trinity Ave. SW. Donation: \$3. Tel: (404) 577-4065.

### OHIO

#### Cleveland

**Prospects for Peace in Northern Ireland.** Speakers: Kathy Whitford, National Board,

American-Irish Political Education Committee; Roger Weist, Director of Political Education, Ohio State Board of the Ancient Order of Hibernians; Michael Fitzsimmons, Socialist Workers Party, member of United Steelworkers of America Local 14919. Sat., Jan. 15, 5 p.m. 1863 W. 25th St. Donation: \$3. Tel: (216) 861-6150.

## BRITAIN

#### Manchester

**Cuba Faces the Challenges of a Changing World.** Report from European Solidarity Conference in Havana, December 6-13. Speaker: Jonathan Silberman, Havana conference participant. Fri., Jan. 14, 7 p.m. Unit 4, 60 Shudehill. Donation: £1. Tel: 061-839 1766.

## Wall Street faces dilemma over Russia

Continued from front page  
governments to quickly provide more aid. "Economic recovery in Russia means shutting down mammoth military, steel, and other factories," states the *Times*. "Russia's reformers can't win over a fearful population unless they have money before they undertake reform."

Strobe Talbott, who had been Ambassador at Large to the former Soviet republic and was recently named to be the deputy secretary of state, told reporters that what was needed was "less shock and more therapy for the Russian people." He said the U.S. government would consider ways of improving social welfare in Russia.

Treasury Secretary Lloyd Bentsen, on the other hand, insists Russia's problems should not be blamed on "shock therapy" economic measures. "I don't believe that when you are having 10 to 20 percent inflation a month that means that you are having excessive reform," stated Bentsen.

Jeffrey Sachs, a professor of economics at Harvard University and adviser to the Russian government, backs Bentsen's point of view. "The reformers here had to struggle in a treacherous, populist, and often corrupt political milieu, and without timely financial support from the West," he says in a December 30 opinion column in the *Wall Street Journal*. Under these conditions, he adds, they "have done extraordinarily well." Sachs writes that what's needed in Russia is a more rapid pace of carrying out this policy, such as has been done in Poland and the Czech Republic.

"The worst social misery is not being caused by reform but by the lack of it," states the *Washington Post*. "Social conditions are much better in Russia than in, say, Ukraine. . . . Russia has made a substantial beginning on the process of reform, while Ukraine has done little and is suffering for it."

"But there's a need for a real safety net in Russia," the *Post* adds. "Perhaps the United States and the other rich democracies have an obligation to come up with larger grants rather than more loans."

"We have not gotten into the business of

setting up social safety nets, and we won't now," an unnamed senior administration official said. "There's not enough money. We can change focus a little bit, but not much."

While all of Russia's basic industry — mines, steel mills, railroads — is still state property, the *Wall Street Journal* remains upbeat about Yeltsin's economic policies. Although almost 70 percent of the nation's small and medium-size businesses are now in private hands, "this doesn't mean that the companies are yet functioning like private businesses in the Western sense," the *Journal* states. "The civic institutions that emerged in the West over a millennium are forming quickly in Russia, but not overnight. . . . Things like enforceable contracts take time."

In spite of the widespread agreement among ruling class pundits that it would advance their cause to increase financial aid to Yeltsin's government, little appears to be headed that way.

Sergei Vasiliev, a leading Russian economist, told the Russian Information Agency January 3 that "in the next two years no large-scale foreign investment will come to Russia."

In an effort to convince the IMF to provide Russia with \$1.5 billion in loans that had previously been promised, the government succeeded in lowering the rate of inflation to 15 percent in November. It had been averaging 20 percent each month. This was accomplished by refusing to pay wages to miners, farmers, soldiers, and others.

The Russian government thus begins 1994 owing \$4 billion in deferred payments, "which will push inflation up again no matter what decisions any new Government makes," concludes an article in the *New York Times*.

### Zhirinovsky's European tour

While capitalist commentators debated at what pace to proceed with austerity measures in Russia, Liberal Democratic Party chief Zhirinovsky embarked on a tour of several European countries to meet with right-wing leaders there.

He spent a few days in Austria visiting with

businessman Edwin Neuwirth, a former member of the Nazi's elite SS military corps. Neuwirth disputes the existence of gas chambers at World War II Nazi death camps. He also visited Germany and Bulgaria.

He was jeered December 28 by an angry crowd of about 500 as he laid flowers at a monument to Russian soldiers in Sofia, Bulgaria. "Hitler!" "Fascist!" "Go home!" the protesters chanted. That same day, the Bulgarian government ordered Zhirinovsky to leave the country within 24 hours, after he called for the resignation of Bulgaria's president. The Interior Ministry charged him with using "offensive language and attitudes towards the Bulgarian head of state" and interfering in the country's internal affairs.

The German government then refused Zhirinovsky's request to reenter that country, saying his renewed presence would "prejudice German state interests." Politicians from all three major German political parties — the Free Democrats, Christian Democrats, and Social Democratic Party — backed the decision to bar him.

With the new Russian parliament set to convene January 11, Yeltsin made clear that he plans to collaborate with Zhirinovsky.

## East Europeans in NATO? No way.

In response to recent developments in Russia, Washington has decided to back off from its initial plan to move toward granting NATO membership to Eastern European countries. Yeltsin has stated his strong opposition to these countries joining NATO.

The U.S. government's current proposal, which will be presented to a NATO summit meeting January 10-11 in Brussels, will invite Eastern European countries and former Soviet republics to take part in military training and exercises with NATO, but without being offered formal membership.

— B.W.

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**Harry Ring**

lines still swell and layoffs at big companies are endemic problems. In addition, wages are flat year to year." — Bloomberg Business News.

**Curb inflation? No problem** — We scoffed when the Bureau of Labor Statistics said that last year the

cost of living increased only 2.7 percent. Now the Bureau says the actual inflation rate may have been 25 percent less than it figured. So, starting next year, a different method of calculating will be used, which is expected to produce better numbers.

**Cleaner air** — Driven out of office after the Rodney King beating, Los Angeles police chief Daryl Gates became a radio talk show host. But the big-mouthed defender of police brutality and racism has been pink-slipped. The station manager said the assignment had been temporary and the end of the year was "the right time" for Gates to move on. In his place, there will be commentary on current issues by a stand-up comic.

**Law 'n order, L.A.** — Ricky Gonzales was busted by a Los Angeles sheriff's deputy on a passenger platform of the Metro line. Hit by the flu, Gonzales had violated the trolley services no-food policy by popping a cough drop. A job seeker from a Nevada Paiute reservation, he will be tried February 1. If convicted, he faces a \$250 fine.

**Ready to die for Greece** — The Greek government has imposed a sharp increase in the cigarette tax. Meanwhile non-smoking university students have been pressing to be freed of the imposition of second-hand smoke. Rallying against this, a poster was issued by the "Brotherhood of Persecuted Smokers." It declared supporters would

"smoke in front of everyone to show who supports the country and who evades taxes."

**Safety net** — Stuart Marylander was director of two nonprofit Los Angeles hospitals kept afloat by state funding. With the hospitals about to go down the tube, Marylander was bounced. But not to worry. He'll be drawing \$25,000 a month for the next three years. One year of this is severance pay. The other two? His contract stipulates he can't be fired without two years notice.

**Then there's the fringes** — Health care specialist Marylander is also drawing \$1,575 a month car allowance, plus medical and disability benefits.

**It figures** — Dan Lemmons, a California dealer, says he's doing well marketing a Charles Manson T-shirt. In 1969, Manson was convicted of mass murder. Lemmons says he's giving "a good chunk" of the T-shirt profits to Operation Rescue, the right-wing "right to lifers."

**Good reminder** — A doctor reader sent along one of the scurrilous, anonymous leaflets she receives from anti-abortionists. This one skipped the usual biblical fulminations but reiterated the abortion is "murder" theme. It concluded with a slogan that seemed more apt than the author intended: "If you think the days of the snake oil salesmen are in the past . . ."

## London uses murder conviction of boys to whip up anticrime frenzy, attack democratic rights

BY PETE KENNEDY

MANCHESTER, England — Two 11-year-old children were convicted November 24th for the murder of two-year old James Bulger.

The case has become a focal point in the "war on crime" campaign by big-business politicians and media in Britain in the past months. What this campaign actually consists of is attacks on democratic rights and attempts to scapegoat "lawless" youth, single mothers, and a criminal "underclass" for the violence and brutality bred every day by capitalist society.

"The killing was an act of unparalleled evil and barbarity, cunning and wicked," Judge Michael Moorland told the boys, aged 10 at the time of Bulger's death. He

side society, from the "underclass."

Egged on by editorials, in which the right of assumed innocence was discounted, an angry crowd gathered at the police station where the boy was held, and his family came under duress. Days later he was released, having had nothing whatsoever to do with the killing.

After the names of the boys eventually convicted were released, feature articles in every daily raked over details of the private lives of their families. One of the boys was from a single-parent household with a large number of children. Truancy, absent fathers, alcohol, and indiscipline, it was implied, had produced these "Little Devils," as one front page called the youths.

### Media promotes 'war on crime'

The media hype around the trial is part and parcel of the "war on crime" promoted at the Conservative Party's conference in October. Major talked in his keynote speech at that event of "getting back to basics," of returning to the "old core values . . . of neighborliness, decency, courtesy," along with "self-discipline and respect for the law." He targeted single mothers as the key obstacle in the way of returning to "the old core values."

According to the *Independent*, unmarried mothers were portrayed at the conference as "feckless young parasites who get pregnant deliberately to jump housing queues and whose aim is thereafter to breed with abandon and with a multitude of partners on income support."

The central target of government ministers was not simply housing and benefit rights of single mothers, which they promised to attack. The politicians sought to convince working people that by disregarding "family values," single young women were creating in their children an underclass of violent criminals. At the conference, Major pledged, "above all to lead a new campaign to defeat the cancer that is crime."

Michael Howard, the home secretary, announced a new set of measures including longer sentences, doubled for those in juvenile prisons; more jailing of 12-14 year olds; allowing police more leeway to erect roadblocks; new "antiterrorist" laws; automatic DNA sampling of all those arrested; and most significantly, ending the right of suspects to remain silent.

The youth of the boys charged in Bulger's death did not prevent thinly veiled calls for a return of capital punishment. Bryan Appleyard wrote in the November 25 *Independent*, "The feeling is that the locking up of two 11-year-olds, for however long, is not enough. It could not satisfy the craving for balance and justice."

In the atmosphere established by these developments the Conservative government has moved to press some new aspects of their offensive. Howard announced December 4 that he would authorize street patrols under the Neighborhood Watch program. Neighborhood Watch is a so-called crimebusting initiative involving 5 million homes and a network of 115,000 groups of neighbors linked into the police system.

Howard's proposals followed those of Education Secretary John Patten, who suggested citizens should undertake a "truancy

watch" in the light of the Bulger killing. On December 6 the government announced it would be introducing a campaign to promote "family values" in the school curricula and unveiled new divorce laws, which would recommend couples go through a mediation program before a divorce could be granted. Though the mediation has not been presented as compulsory, the proposals threaten to deny legal aid for divorce costs if it is not observed.

The opposition Labour Party has joined in the law-and-order call. Labour Party spokesman on police affairs Alun Michael criticized the Neighborhood Watch proposals, saying the government was renegeing on its promise of more police. The number of cops has fallen by 224 to 125,000.

### Capitalism is source of violence

Feigning tremendous concern for the welfare of children like Bulger in order to manipulate popular feeling is not a new tactic of the ruling class. In order to win support for the murderous slaughter unleashed against the working people of Iraq in 1991, the same newspapers prominently featured a story of Kuwaiti babies being taken from hospital incubators by Iraqi troops. This was later admitted to have

been a complete fabrication. But by that time tens of thousands of working people, including many young children, had died as a result of relentless bomb attacks, starvation, and disease.

The capitalist rulers care no more about two-year-old Bulger than they did about those who died in Iraq. The capitalist system, with the wars, unemployment, and hunger it generates, is the biggest source of violence and brutality working people face. And it is the vicious dog-eat-dog nature of the system that breaks down human solidarity, leading to the acts of violence that are more commonly considered crime.

The supposed solutions put forward by the politicians and big-business media — putting more cops on the streets, crusading for family values, combating the so-called underclass — are aimed against the working class. These measures divide the class, convincing workers to see each other as less than human, as a subclass to be feared instead of as allies in fighting against the horrors created by capitalism and to build a new society. They are used to take back democratic rights working people and their organizations need to defend their interests. They should be opposed.

## — 25 AND 50 YEARS AGO —

### THE MILITANT

Published in the Interest of the Working People  
January 17, 1969

Price 10¢

### THE MILITANT

PUBLISHED IN THE INTEREST OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

NEW YORK, N.Y.

FIVE (5) CENTS

January 15, 1944

Encouraged by the intensified capitalist assault against American labor and inspired by Hitler's mass extermination of the European Jews, fascist hoodlum gangs directed by such scum as the "Christian Front," Nazi Bundists and similar outfits have reopened their campaign of anti-Jewish terrorism on New York City streets. Similar terrorism is reported from Boston, Baltimore and other large cities.

Within the past three months this city has been the scene of more than 200 physical assaults, including knifings, on Jewish youngsters and aged people and vandalistic acts against Jewish synagogues and cemeteries. The New York City Police Department, notoriously infested with members and "ex-members" of the fascist "Christian Front," has failed to give any protection against these assaults or to arrest the perpetrators of these criminal acts.

Workers throughout the country will recall the demonstration of 50,000 anti-fascist workers, organized and led by the Socialist Workers Party, which in Feb. 1939 surrounded a public rally of the Nazi Bund and "Christian Fronters" at Madison Square Garden and which taught the fascists a lesson they have long remembered. That night, it will also be recalled, [Mayor Fiorello] LaGuardia's police, 16,000 strong, rode down with their horses and clubbed the anti-fascist demonstrators and protected the fascists.

Anti-Semitic attacks, just as anti-Negro attacks, will never be successfully fought by depending on a LaGuardia, by relying on the capitalists or their government.

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## Their morals and ours

Questionable business connections. Concealing possible evidence. Using state resources for personal business. The picture that's been painted in the press of U.S. president Bill Clinton over the last few weeks is not a pretty one.

These scandals, however, are not the real problem with the Clinton administration. Financial and moral corruption are endemic to the capitalist class and their lackeys in Congress and the White House. All capitalist politicians think nothing of it, except when it can be used to scandalize an opponent. The financial misconduct Clinton is accused of is small potatoes compared to what Democratic and Republican politicians and other businessmen do every day — both legally and illegally — to exploit workers and farmers around the world.

The real crimes of Clinton and the entire capitalist class he represents are numerous. They include: bombing Iraq during the president's first days in office; forcibly returning Haitian refugees into the hands of a military dictatorship; tightening aspects of the trade embargo against Cuba; massacring more than 80 human beings last April in Waco, Texas, upon the order of Attorney General Janet Reno and with the president's full backing and encouragement; and using the cops and courts to frame miners in West Virginia for striking against the coal bosses last year — to name just a few examples.

The allegations of misdeeds surrounding Clinton less than a year after taking office reflect the problems the ruling class faces in attempting to cut social programs, attack democratic rights of working people, and lower our standard of living during a worldwide depression. Former president John F. Kennedy has today become infamous for his philandering. But Kennedy ruled in a time of capitalist stability, and his exploits weren't widely publicized until after his death.

To build their own power base, capitalist politicians regularly expose or frame each other for corruption. They all lie and steal. And working people never get the truth from either the conservatives or liberals in Congress.

## Washington's human guinea pigs

The revelations that the U.S. government exposed hundreds of individuals to high levels of radiation in a series of secret experiments, as well as contaminating millions with its nuclear testing and leaks from power and weapons plants, is a prime example of the utter contempt the bosses and their government have for working people.

U.S. president Bill Clinton hopes to emerge shining from the horrifying disclosures. It was George Bush and Ronald Reagan's fault, he says, for not bringing the experiments to light sooner. Energy Secretary Hazel O'Leary boasts she is "appalled, shocked, and deeply saddened."

But Clinton and his cronies are crying crocodile tears.

The radioactive dishes fed to children in Massachusetts and the blasts of nuclear particles directed at the testicles of prison inmates in Washington and Oregon do not belong to some bygone era. They are the conscious and considered policy of a ruling class that, then as now, views working people as nothing more than wage slaves for their factories, guinea pigs for their laboratories, and cannon fodder for their wars.

The determination of Clinton, O'Leary, and Co. to establish strict limits on compensation to those who are victims of the government's tests, Rung Tang's fight for justice, and the millions of dollars the U.S. government continues to spend to defend the nuclear industry, brand Clinton guilty just as surely as the newly released docu-

ments brand his predecessors. It's no accident, however, that one of the main attacks on Clinton appeared in the right-wing magazine *American Spectator*. Rightist politicians like Patrick Buchanan and Ross Perot try to feed off these kind of scandals. They tap into a growing conviction among millions of people that the established bourgeois politicians are incapable of addressing the deepening social crisis. More and more people are becoming open to the suggestion that these figures are immoral and not fit to be in office and that the parliamentary and democratic institutions under capitalism are rotten places where thieves, bureaucrats, and maneuverers hide. And more and more people believe that something radical must be done to break through this spreading corruption.

The bourgeois right will win adherents to their own radical — and reactionary — views and proposals until the working class begins to forge its own leadership with class struggle answers.

Buchanan rails against both the immorality of Clinton and the craveness of the press for printing the accusations against him. Working people must reject this sort of demagogic appeal. Buchanan's actual aim is to draw a cadre around him that can ultimately form a fascist movement to preserve capitalism as the crisis gets worse and the working class builds organized resistance.

The gallons of ink devoted to describing Clinton's alleged misuse of money and power to enrich his family and quell his sexual appetites do not strengthen the working class, or encourage more workers to engage in politics.

The scandal-mongering of the right-wing press sidetracks discussion from where the real problems lie — with the capitalist system that's dripping with the blood of the world's workers and farmers. The corruption of individual members of the ruling class is just one reflection of capitalism's vile and immoral nature. It needs to be replaced by a society that puts human needs before profits. That's what working people should keep our fire on.

ments brand his predecessors.

Those who try to get the U.S. government off the hook — arguing that the experiments were a result of dedicated scientists working with a new and unknown material, or that this was all necessary to prepare for an imminent nuclear attack from the Soviet Union — do not speak the truth. Politicians in Washington and officials in the nuclear industry knew plenty about the effects of radioactivity. That's why they went to such lengths to keep their experiments secret. And the threat of atomic war following the slaughter of World War II did not come from Moscow. It came from Washington.

Working people cannot rely on the profit-hungry employers and their spokespeople to look out for our interests. The labor movement must demand that every document related to atomic tests and other secret experiments of the nuclear industry be made public. Nuclear power and weapons plants must be closed down, with workers getting union-scale wages until they get new jobs. Washington should fully compensate victims of government testing and those exposed to radiation from nuclear facilities.

Most importantly, working people should join in the fight for a socialist society. If anything clinches the verdict on the inhuman nature of capitalism, Washington's nuclear guinea pigs do so.

## The shock therapy dilemma

The strong showing of rightist politician Vladimir Zhirinovsky in Russia's parliamentary elections has thrown a layer of the U.S. ruling class into a tizzy. Like the sizeable vote for Ross Perot in the 1992 U.S. presidential elections, it is a sure sign of increasing capitalist instability. Because the crisis in Russia is, in fact, a crisis of capitalism.

Some cracks have appeared in what has been the employers' almost unanimous support for the so-called shock therapy method of attempting to crush the working class in order to rapidly integrate Russia's economy into the world capitalist market. "Doctrinaire government reformers . . . and their Western counterparts [should] ease up," *Business Week* warns. "Russia and the West have to find a path to reform that doesn't put people's backs to the wall."

But that's precisely what the imperialist powers, along with Russian president Boris Yeltsin and the other procapitalist bureaucrats in Moscow, have to do to reestablish capitalism there: Put workers against the wall.

There is no kinder, gentler, road to capitalism. "We have not gotten into the business of setting up social safety nets," one senior administration official stated bluntly. That's why Jeffrey Sachs, U.S. advisor to the Russian government, calls for stepping up the pace of the so-called market reforms. Sachs argues that shock therapy was never really implemented. From the point of view big capital that is probably more accurate than *Business Week's* assessment. Russian workers, however, feel in their bones the ruination that Yeltsin's reforms have already wrought on their livelihood.

The debate in the big-business press today is a far cry from just a few short years ago when the capitalist rulers, celebrated their "victory against communism" in the cold war. Their dream has turned into a nightmare, however, as Russia becomes a massive, destabilizing monster, not the desperately hoped-for boost of new markets and investments.

In order to reestablish capitalism, the imperialist powers will have to defeat the working class in Russia directly, something that more than six decades of Stalinist brutality and mind-numbing bureaucratization were not able to do. The Russian toilers have shown themselves quite reluctant to embrace the concrete realities of hunger, homelessness, and unemployment that capitalist reform is generating.

In addition, there is no ready-made capitalist class in Russia, no banking and credit system, no bourgeois legal system, and no attitudes and work habits that have been imposed on workers in capitalist countries during centuries. "You can't build a prefab market democracy and then plop it on top of a country," the *Wall Street Journal* grumbles.

The working class in Russia will increasingly find itself fighting against the ravages of capitalism side by side with toilers from all corners of the globe. It is as part of this international struggle that working people there — like their brothers and sisters around the world — will reject both the shock therapy methods of Yeltsin and the imperialist rulers and the demagogic nationalist politics of the Zhirinovskys of all stripes.

## What way forward for Irish struggle?

In a letter on the facing page, reader Kathleen Shields questions an editorial titled "British troops out of Ireland" that appeared in the November 15 issue of the *Militant*. Her letter misses the central point of the editorial, which stated that today's crisis of British rule over Ireland "stems from the long-term decline of British imperialism, its deep economic depression, and the stress of trying to compete with rival capitalist powers as the old world order comes apart." While the partition of Ireland has since the 1920s provided a large pool of cheap labor, as well as a means to exploit Ireland as a whole, today this is in question. Nineteen thousand troops have been tied down in a 25-year war with no end in sight. The British rulers need to be able to deploy them elsewhere if they are to compete with their rivals. The war in the North is now an obstacle to investment by capitalists. Meanwhile capitalist rivals from the United States, Germany, and Japan are moving more into the increasingly lucrative south of Ireland.

Shields is right that London will continue to play the "Orange card" to preserve its colonial rule. The question

## DISCUSSION WITH OUR READERS

is to what extent can the British government successfully do this today. It is a mistake to describe, as Shields does, workers who are Protestant as "Unionist workers," as though a worker's religion determines forever his or her political outlook. It is worth considering in this regard the nonracial stance of the African National Congress (ANC) towards people of all colors in South Africa. ANC leader Nelson Mandela continually stresses that opponents of the apartheid regime who are white have an important place in the freedom struggle. He never starts with blasting the privileges they've gained from apartheid.

All working people in Ireland are increasingly being forced into the world of the modern class struggle, opening up room to focus on what is common, not what divides them. Every time there has been a rise of class struggle in Britain and Ireland, steps towards unity have been posed. When the British miners struck in 1984-5, collections and solidarity were organized throughout Ireland. The ferocity of the police assault on the miners' picket lines led to a lead article in the strike newspaper entitled "From Belfast to Blidworth," which compared the police brutality against miners to the British military occupation of Northern Ireland.

Another example of the openings in Northern Ireland today is the response to the assassination of Sean Hagan. A worker who is Catholic, Hagan was murdered by rightist thugs. The *Today* newspaper reported December 1, "Workmates at the European Components factory, most of whom are Protestant, stayed away in respect and to protest at the outlawed Ulster Freedom Fighters who claimed responsibility." We should not begin with an assumption about the "Orange card" but with the fight to unify all working people in struggle by demanding: Immediate withdrawal of British troops, self-determination for Ireland as a whole, free the political prisoners, end censorship, and positive (affirmative) action for Catholics. It is through this course that labor can forge a leadership to fight for a workers and farmers government in Ireland.

Finally, Shields's point of reference to Karl Marx and Frederick Engels is mistaken. The book by Marx and Engels "Ireland and the Irish Question"<sup>1</sup> tells the story of how the two communist leaders sought to explain the exploitation of Ireland in class terms. In the framework of building the communist movement, Marx and Engels built solidarity with the Irish national struggle, including organizing demonstrations in London in support of Irish prisoners. They incidentally had no hesitation pointing to the weaknesses of the Fenian movement, the main "plebeian" force of Irish nationalism. When a tailor's shop was blown up in London, Marx wrote to Engels, "The London masses, who have shown great sympathy for Ireland, will be made wild by it and driven into the arms of the government party."

In fact the main point of the *Militant* editorial was not to criticize the IRA but to explain that the "opportunities . . . to build a leadership that can unite working people . . . are greater today because of the breakup of the Stalinist parties and regimes." Stalinism, as in many parts of the world, betrayed the thousands of young men and women in Ireland who in the course of resisting British rule began to look for a socialist perspective. In place of communism they found Stalinism, which in the name of working-class unity failed to fight British rule. This is not as large a factor today.

Shields's assertion that the Russian revolution was incidental to developments in Ireland is also mistaken. While the Easter Rising of 1916 did initiate the revolutionary struggle against British rule, it was the Russian revolution that opened the political space and gave confidence to the masses of Irish people. The challenge fighters faced was not "poverty" and "a shortage of weapons" but to build a working-class leadership. Reaching for the lessons of the Russian revolution as well as those of the socialist revolution in Cuba was, and remains, one of the main challenges facing fighters in Ireland and Britain today.

— PETE CLIFFORD

1. The book can be obtained from Pathfinder, 410 West Street, New York, NY 10014, Fax (212) 727-0150, or from bookstores, including those listed on page 12. It costs \$19.95. If ordering by mail add \$3.00 for postage and handling.

# Iowa meatpackers reject IBP's 'last, best' offer

This column is devoted to reporting the resistance by working people to the employers' assault on their living standards, working conditions, and unions.

We invite you to contribute short items to this column as a way for other fighting workers around the world to read about and learn from these important struggles. Jot down a few lines about what is happening in your union, at your workplace or other workplaces in your area, including interesting political discussions.

Meatpackers at IBP's pork slaughter plant in Perry, Iowa, rejected management's "last, best, and final offer" by a vote of 219 to 95 December 20.

The four-year contract offer in-

cluded increased medical costs and a phony profit-sharing scheme. Wages were to be frozen the first year, with possible increases the second and third years. The pay raises would be contingent on whether wages at large non-IBP pork slaughtering plants rose. Depending on the Pork Industry Wage Index, fourth year wages could actually go down.

Many workers felt insulted and outraged at this latest offer and voted accordingly.

IBP is the largest U.S. producer of beef and the world's largest pork slaughtering company. The Perry plant employs 630 production workers, more than 76 percent of whom are members of Local

crease it is even worse. He said a six-month contract would be better, since the cost of everything is constantly going up. □

## 100 rally in Puerto Rico to defend fired strikers

One hundred people rallied in front of the capitol in San Juan, Puerto Rico, December 13 to protest the firing of 15 union activists by American Airlines. All of the 15 members of the Association of Professional Flight Attendants (APFA) were active in the recent five-day strike against the carrier.

San Juan, one of the smaller bases for flight attendants at American Airlines, is where 9 of the 15



Militant/Miguel Zárate

Farmworkers and supporters rally outside the World of Coca-Cola Museum in downtown Atlanta December 31 to protest the company's termination of its contract with more than 600 Florida farmworkers who pick oranges for Coca-Cola-owned Minute Maid. Coke's decision became effective that day, even though the contract with the United Farm Workers (UFW) didn't expire until July 1994. "If we do not get a satisfactory response . . . we will begin an international boycott of Coke products," UFW leader Delores Huerta told the 40 demonstrators. More than 35,000 other farmworkers' pay is patterned on agreements between the UFW and Coca-Cola.

## ON THE PICKET LINE

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fired activists worked. People at the candle-light vigil wore buttons supporting the reinstatement of the "SJK 9". SJK is the airline industry code for San Juan. The SJK 9 were falsely accused by the company of harassing a flight attendant who was crossing the picket line.

Pedro Rivera, chairman of the San Juan council of the APFA, said the union was organizing similar activities in every city where it has members. Most of the participants

were APFA members and their families. Unionists from the Communications Workers of America and the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees International Union also participated.

Originally 16 workers in San Juan were suspended with pay. Charges were dropped against 7 of the flight attendants. In one case the charges were dropped because the suspension letter said the worker had harassed an airline employee

while in the hearing company officials claimed he punched a photographer.

The next step for the fired workers is an arbitration hearing. □

*The following people contributed to this week's column: Cleve Andrew Pulley, member UFCW Local 1149 in Perry, Iowa; Ron Richards in San Juan, Puerto Rico; and Miguel Zárate, member United Auto Workers Local 882 in Atlanta.*

## LETTERS

### Irish freedom struggle

For 65 years the *Militant* has had an admirable record of support for the Irish struggle for self-determination and in educating American workers about its importance. However, the editorial "British troops out of Ireland" in the November 15 issue contained a number of factual errors and at least one important omission.

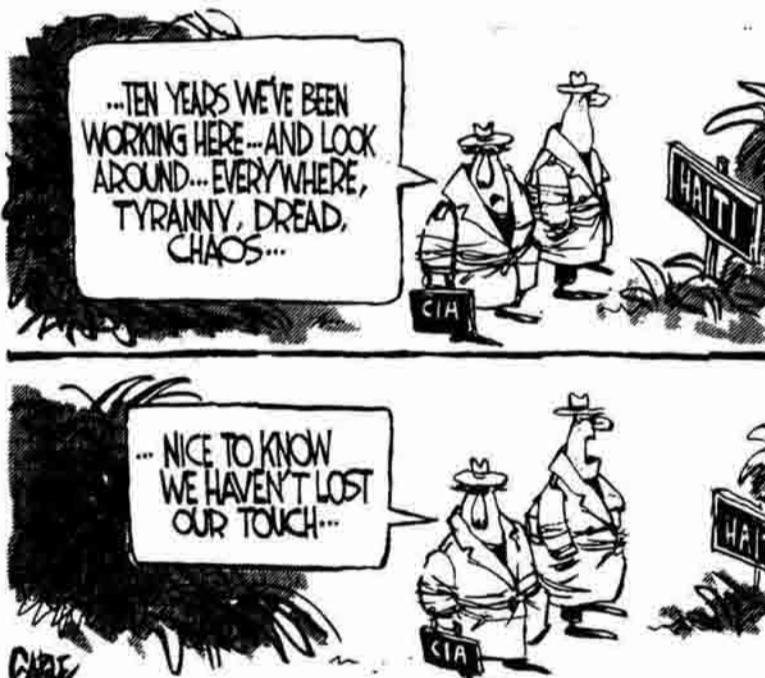
To write that the capitalists of Belfast and London "won some workers to their Unionist banner by providing privileges to a layer of Protestant workers" is simply untrue and is a sugar coating of the situation that has existed in the North. The editorial also implies that this took place after partition. The fact is that partition was won in battles in which Unionist workers whole-heartedly participated on the side of Britain, violently expelling all Catholic workers from the majority of major Belfast industries and demanding terrorist actions against the Catholic community.

The privileges to a "layer" of Protestant workers were granted, however marginally, to virtually all Protestant workers in the form of jobs, housing, and freedom from the terror which stalks the Catholic community . . . no small thing in the Northern Irish state.

There have been gigantic labor struggles temporarily uniting Catholic and Protestant workers, raising the horrendous specter (to the capitalists) of working-class unity. But the capitalists have, since the creation of the Northern Irish state, always been able to play the "Orange card" to rekindle sectarianism and diffuse labor struggles.

To begin the process of establishing a basis for working-class unity which can carry all the workers of the North of Ireland forward in the battles that are coming, one has to recognize that these differences exist.

Contrary to the editorial, the Irish



struggle for independence was initiated by the Easter Rising of 1916, and was well under way by the time of the 1917 Russian revolution. It did not follow in the wake of the Russian revolution. The limited independence from England that Ireland achieved was won after the Russian revolution, but the struggle started before it. I think that this is important because possibly Irish history may have unfolded differently had the revolutionary working-class leader, James Connolly, lived to draw the lessons of the Russian revolution.

In my opinion it was not shortcomings on the part of Irish revolutionaries which prevented class unity being achieved in the six counties of Northeast Ireland. Rather it was the result of British imperialism carefully fostering sectarianism and fear on the part of Protestant workers and spending huge amounts of money to arm the Loyalists. There was no lack of will, or indeed of vision, by Irish revolutionaries who

suffered imprisonment, torture, and death at the hands of the British. There was poverty, a shortage of weapons, and the fact that Ireland faced a brutal, fierce imperialist power with no support or solidarity from the British working class.

In a rather broad-reaching editorial which discusses at some length the necessity for forging a revolutionary leadership in Ireland, nowhere is the demand for an end to partition raised. I guarantee that the Irish view this as slightly more important than the demand you raised regarding the broadcasting ban on Irish nationalists being heard on British radio and television.

Partition is not in the interests of Protestant workers. Though they may enjoy slight privileges in comparison to their Catholic counterparts, they live in a state which cynically uses their prejudice against Catholics and their blind loyalty to British imperialism to manipulate them into abandoning every effort they make to improve

their living conditions and their lives. And, in my opinion, there can be no working-class unity without Protestant workers breaking from the Orange system, in which they are steeped from birth, and raising the demand for an end to partition as their own.

The editorial criticized the IRA for treating British workers as part of the problem. Perhaps this is because the British working class has never differentiated itself from the British ruling class with regard to Ireland.

Marx and Engels dealt with this problem and considered it to be essential to the liberation of the English working class that the British workers break with their ruling class around the question of Ireland. In fact, they considered it so essential that they described it as a precondition for the British working class succeeding in breaking its own chains. They also did not demand that Irish freedom fighters abandon tactics or dictate how they should pursue the struggle. They recognized that it is the responsibility of the English working class to support the Irish struggle and that nothing is served by starting at any other point than one of support of Irish freedom and solidarity with those who carry out the fight for Irish freedom.

*Kathleen Shields  
Chicago, Illinois*

### Philippine prisoners

December 10 was the 45th anniversary of the universal declaration of human rights by the United Nations.

Task Force Detainees of the Philippines (TFDP), an organization for political prisoners, campaigned that day, demanding, "Release all political prisoners now."

The TFDP said in a handbill, "The past 16 months under the [Fidel] Ramos administration however have illustrated Ramos' failure to live up to his liberal posturing. Despite his

avowed goal of attaining 'a just, comprehensive, peaceful and lasting resolution to the internal armed conflict,' his administration refused to effect the immediate and unconditional release of all political prisoners as a step towards this goal."

And they explained, "From July 1992 to November 1993, 21 political prisoners have been convicted — mostly of criminal charges like murder, robbery, arson and illegal possession of firearms. Of 350 political detainees languishing in 79 detention centers nationwide, 123 were arrested under the Ramos administration, 217 under [Corazon] Aquino and 10 under [Ferdinand] Marcos. The total of the political arrest and detention victims under the Ramos administration has already reached 1,080 — 59 of whom were tortured. Two of the arrest victims were salvaged (summary execution) and four have disappeared . . . meanwhile, 127 persons were killed in several incidents of extra-judicial executions and massacres. Five others died in unpremeditated killings."

Thus, until now our human rights situation is very terrible.

*Free all political prisoners now!!  
Taro Ozeki  
Manila, Philippines*

*The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of general interest to our readers. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.*

*The *Militant* special prisoner fund makes it possible to send reduced-rate subscriptions to prisoners who can't pay for them. To help this important cause, send your contribution to *Militant Prisoner Subscription Fund*, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014.*

# Atlantic Canada fishermen, workers ruined by closing of fishing grounds

BY ROGER ANNIS

SAMBRO, Nova Scotia — Hundreds more fishing industry workers along Canada's Atlantic coast were thrown out of work December 20 following the latest closing of fishing grounds by the Canadian government.

Since July 1992, more than 35,000 fishermen and fish plant workers in the five provinces of Atlantic Canada have lost their livelihood as fishing for cod, haddock, and other species called groundfish (because they feed along the ocean floor in the relatively shallow waters off Canada's east coast) has been closed or sharply reduced.

The closings have devastated hundreds of coastal fishing communities where for the most part there is no alternative livelihood. In 1991 landings of cod in the region were worth \$700 million, 21 percent of the value of the entire codfish harvest.

## Roots of the crisis

The government announced the groundfish closings claiming the species are threatened with extinction by overfishing. Some scientists also cite environmental factors such as fluctuation in water temperatures as worsening the impact of overfishing.

"We see something that has never happened before," described Robert Hache of the Acadian Professional Fishermen's Association. "We have a total collapse, an ecological catastrophe of unknown proportions."

George Rose, a research scientist with the Department of Fisheries in St. John's, Newfoundland, told CBC Radio in December, "The decline of the cod stock is quite catastrophic. It's probably down to 10 percent of the level that it might have been five years ago."

Wade Lovelace, a worker at Sambro Fisheries on the southwest coast of Nova Scotia, described the impact on him.

"I moved here three years ago from Newfoundland," he explained, "and was lucky to land a job at that time. I was getting 40-hour weeks, sometimes lots more."

"This year, work has dropped to 20 or 30 hours a week. Last week I got only 8 hours. We'll get some work from processing lobsters when that season opens, and from some other species like mackerel. But if the groundfish ban remains, things will be real bad."

Small fishermen blame the crisis on the greed and the destructive fishing practices of large Canadian and European companies. "There's some great debate taking place now in the scientific circles about, you know, where did 200 million fish go," Newfoundland fisherman Bernard Martin told a CBC Radio program last April. "We all know where the fish went — it was over-



Joseph Sesk and his 35-foot fishing skiff have been out of the water since 1991. Sesk, from Newfoundland, is among thousands of idled fishermen in Atlantic Canada.

fished. Everybody could see it coming ... It's been predicted for many years."

A huge expansion took place over the past 20 years in the Canadian fishing industry and internationally. The growth took place in Canada after 1977 when control over offshore resources by maritime countries was extended from 12 to 200 miles by international agreement.

The biggest capitalist families and financial institutions in the country's eastern provinces poured tens of millions of dollars of capital into the industry in the following years. The number of fish processing plants in Atlantic Canada rose from 559 in 1977 to 1,063 in 1991.

This increase was encouraged and heavily financed by the federal and provincial governments in Canada.

"It was just a free-for-all ... they thought there was a gold mine out there and it was going to last forever," said Martin.

Large fishing craft, factory trawlers already in use by European fishing companies, were built for the fleets of the big Canadian companies. These boats are capable of catching and processing huge amounts of fish. They drag nets along the sea floor, scooping everything out of the water, and disrupting the ecosystem. Immature fish, unwanted species, or fish for which the boat has no allotted quota are tossed dead back into the sea.

An article in the June 24, 1993, issue of the Halifax *Mail-Star* cited the example of a trawler off the Nova Scotia coast that landed 19,000 pounds of fish for one week's work last January, a good catch at the time. But this represented only 20 percent of its total catch — the rest had been discarded overboard!

## Gov't ignored warnings

The federal government and large fishing companies scoffed at small fishermen's repeated warnings about overfishing. Scientists in the federal Department of Fisheries produced optimistic fishing forecasts. But these were based on the catch rates of the fishermen.

"We've known for 50 years in fisheries that commercial catch rates are no index at all of the decline of fish stock," Carl Walters told CBC Radio in December. Walters is a professor of fisheries and zoology at the University of British Columbia. "The stock can be collapsing entirely while success rates in catching go up because fishermen become better at finding the fish," he said.

Even after the first moratorium in Newfoundland in 1992, the fisheries department

## For further reading

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In New International no. 6

BY MICHEL DUGÉE  
How Canadian imperialism was built on the backs of workers, farmers, and other toilers. It explains the roots of the oppression of the Native people; how an oppressed nationality came into being in Quebec; and the material basis for an alliance of workers, working farmers, and other exploited producers of all national origins and languages. \$10.00

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continued to refuse calls by fishermen to close other threatened fishing grounds or reduce the catch.

## Reactionary campaign

With sharply declining catches beginning to appear in 1990 and 1991, small fishermen turned their anger on the federal government through militant protests. They condemned its failure to manage the fishery and quota allotments, which favored large companies over small fishermen.

The federal and provincial governments began to peddle a reactionary and chauvinist campaign pinning the blame for the growing crisis on overfishing by fishermen from other countries. Ninety percent of the fishing grounds off Canada's east coast lie within the Canadian territorial limit. Companies based in European countries, Japan, and Cuba, fish in the remaining 10 percent of the grounds. These companies also purchase quotas within Canadian waters.

Government ministers, fish company representatives, and officials of the Newfoundland Food, Fishery and Allied Workers (NFFAW), the largest union of fish industry workers in eastern Canada, called for Canadian navy warships to drive foreign fishing vessels out of the fishing grounds, both inside and outside Canada's 200-mile limit. Vigilante-style flotillas were organized in Newfoundland in 1992 and 1993 to challenge foreign vessels in international waters. There were also confrontations directed at fishermen on St. Pierre and Miquelon, two islands governed by France that are located off the Newfoundland coast.

The leading public spokesperson for this campaign was Richard Cashin, the president of the NFFAW.

In Nova Scotia, fishermen blockaded a Russian fishing vessel in Shelburne harbor for seven days in July 1993 to prevent it from unloading cod for processing. The fish had been caught in international waters off Norway.

The anti-foreign campaign, however, did not square with the facts.

The 1991 State of Canada's Environment Report, for example, produced by the federal government's own Environment Canada, laid most of the blame for overfishing on Canadian fleets. "Canada's own fishing fleets have substantially contributed to the current crisis in the fishery," it stated.

According to the Canadian Atlantic Fisheries Scientific Advisory Committee, in 1991 Canadian vessels caught 127,000 tonnes of cod off Atlantic Canada while European boats took 47,000 tonnes.

In 1992, European governments set themselves a quota of 27,000 tonnes of cod while the Canadian government set 120,000 tonnes (neither quota was met due to the disappearance of the fish).

"There's overfishing going on by everybody — the Europeans and the Canadians," said Paddy Gray as he readied his lobster traps on the wharf in Sambro in preparation for the start of the season. "The fisheries department lets it happen because they're bought off. They're all paid lobbyists for National Sea or Clearwater [the two largest fish companies in Nova Scotia]."

## What the future holds

A great pall of uncertainty now hangs over the future for workers in the industry. Following angry protests by fishermen in 1992, a compensation package was created by the federal government that pays \$300 per week to fishermen and fish plant workers. But federal fisheries minister Brian Tobin said December 20 that no compensation money is budgeted after May 15, 1994.

The premier of Newfoundland, the province hardest hit by the closings, is proposing a "reformed" unemployment insurance program that would throw 30,000 recipients in that province onto welfare.

A federal government advisory council, headed by Cashin, plans to solve the fisheries crisis by removing half the fishermen from the industry. The council proposes to lift the licenses of those it calls "non-professional" fishermen, that is, those with the smallest income and fewest weeks of work per year.

While some scientists predict a quick recovery of the fishery to commercially viable levels, others like Walters call such optimistic predictions "absolute nonsense."

"I think the minimum recoverable time to fishable levels is 25-30 years," he said, "and it could be as long as 60 years."

Rose doesn't rule out the possibility that the cod stock has been so damaged that it will never recover.

The crisis that has struck the fishery in Atlantic Canada is not unique to this part of the world. A report released last November by the World Watch Institute in Washington, D.C., stated that all 17 of the world's major fishing areas have either reached or exceeded their natural limits. Fish stock in 9 of these areas is in serious decline.

According to Donald Ludwig, a professor of mathematics and biology at the University of British Columbia, the disaster that has struck the fishery is looming for other resource-based industries, such as forestry, as well.

"We can see quite clearly in the case of forestry that the world's stocks of available timber are being depleted at quite unsustainable rates." Ludwig said that destructive harvesting practices of natural resources must stop or the consequences will be devastating.

"I hope we are capable of changing things before we get some horrible catastrophe that brings the lesson home."

Roger Annis is a member of Canadian Auto Workers Local 1900 in Montreal.

